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ABSTRACT

As part of the "Educating Gifted and Talented Students" series, the booklet offers the teacher guidelines for facilitating communication abilities in gifted children. Following an introduction, a first chapter lists characteristics of students gifted in speech communication and leadership. The essence of giftedness in speech communication and leadership is seen to be the capacity for effective flexibility. Additional characteristics of leadership and speech communication abilities are mentioned in a second chapter and three methods (including showing ambiguous pictures to students and asking them to describe what they see portrayed) for identifying leadership and communication abilities are outlined. A final chapter, which makes up the bulk of the booklet, describes strategies for teaching oral communication. A purposes section discusses the general directions or goals for communication instruction aimed at the gifted. The section on practices suggests methods for achieving those goals, methods especially applicable for gifted students. A programs section deals with integrating the suggested methods into the classroom setting. Among procedures considered are experiential learning, individualized learning, independent study projects, and internships. Appendixes include information on introspection activities, teacher/student agreement on course ground rules, a troubleshooting checklist, a leader's brief, and steps for program evaluation. (SBH)

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Teaching the Gifted and Talented Oral Communication and Leadership

by
Paul G. Friedman

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INTRODUCTION

The field of speech communication is rooted in insights developed to teach the gifted. The segment with the longest tradition, that of public oratory, is founded on the conceptual work of Aristotle, teacher to the gifted leader Alexander the Great. In the centuries since, many leading philosophers and educators have continued to examine the process of "rhetoric" as a way to explain the dynamics of effective leadership to the elite who inherited or seized power.

Social changes in the twentieth century have broadened the group who study communication. Certainly democracy, egalitarianism, and universal education have increased the opportunities for involvement in political life. Through the 1940s the teaching of speech communication emphasized simulating the public platform of the political leader. Even students from humble backgrounds gave speeches and engaged in debates, as if they were preparing to run for public office. In the 1950s urbanization and the growth of bureaucratic structures in business and government created awareness of the "organization man," and his communication needs were addressed in speech curricula. In the turbulent 1960s breakdowns of dialogue caused by "communication gaps" between generations, between races, between sexes, and between the establishment and the counter-culture added another dimension. The 1970s, the so-called "Me Decade," witnessed strains in the more intimate, personal relationships among friends, within families, and even within individuals. This, too, provided material for study in communication classrooms.

The 1980s promise to be a decade of stunning social change. Many of our natural resources are beginning to be depleted. We will move into a postindustrial society characterized by increased heterogeneity of perspectives, interdependence, interaction, and destandardization. (3) Tensions will be high, various special interest groups will compete for preeminence, and institutions will have to reorient themselves. Gifted students who become nuclear physicists, college presidents, hospital administrators, or leaders in any other sphere will, in the course of their careers, have to explain, defend, negotiate, and in countless other ways carry

out demanding transactions with people of divergent viewpoints. Ability to communicate will itself be a valuable criterion for employment and advancement.

Feldman (12) studied prodigious achievement in a number of young people and came to believe it was the result of a "remarkable coincidence," i.e., some talented individuals happen to encounter adults who can recognize and nurture their abilities. There are several reasons why the 1980s will provide many opportunities for such "coincidences" to occur for individuals gifted in communication.

First, we are growing more aware that distinct predispositions for leadership exist. We know that a segment of the gifted student group is not gifted in interpersonal communication. Levinson (33) and Powell (41) reported several clinically observed cases of gifted children who were experiencing severe problems in social interaction. Mason et al. (35) and McLain and Andrews (37) found that the gifted college students they studied were less well-adjusted or had less rewarding interpersonal relationships than did control groups of average students.

In addition, outstanding performance in social activities has not been found to correlate highly with other forms of giftedness. Holland and Richards (25), using a survey of 7,000 college freshmen, found that academic achievement and extracurricular activities were relatively independent dimensions. Wing and Wallach (51) found that among the group of 503 freshmen they studied general intelligence and Scholastic Aptitude scores failed to correlate with such extracurricular achievements as student leadership. These comparisons suggest that we are recognizing meaningful distinctions between intellectual and social abilities. Both the 1972 Marland report and the 1978 report on education of the gifted and talented singled out "leadership ability" as a distinct component of giftedness requiring "differential educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program." (46a)

An environment for nurturing communication giftedness is now emerging. The field of communication has grown remarkably in the last few decades. We have seen a proliferation of new courses, departments, national organizations, journals, and conferences focusing on this domain.

There have been substantial contributions by theorists, researchers, and educators in the allied fields of psychology, education, business, and social work. Nonacademic centers of learning offer workshops and institutes and experiment with innovative teaching methodologies.

The knowledge and the means for facilitating growth of communication abilities are now available. Teachers who see in students the potential to excel in this domain can offer them a program that will allow them to demonstrate and develop their talents. Society is ready to offer graduates opportunities to use these abilities. The 1980s are an excellent time for attending to children gifted in communication.

In many schools speech communication classes cover a wide spectrum of activities—some already catering to the gifted and talented. Students interested in oral expression have a chance to develop their talents through competitive forensics events, elective courses in public speaking, drama classes, play production clubs, and workshops in radio, television, and/or film. In these ways, this field has long provided special opportunities for the gifted.

All of these traditional formats fit the speaker/performer-to-audience model. In each case, communicators prepare and deliver their messages to passive hearers. What about interactions—situations in which an *exchange* occurs among participants? This process, called "interpersonal communication," has not yet been taught with the gifted in mind. Interpersonal communication is concerned with everyday talk in less structured or less formal circumstances. Hence its value is universal and not limited to any special group. However, studies of the actual daily lives of prominent leaders in a variety of settings indicate that a major portion of their activities are carried out through face-to-face oral transactions and that their competency as leaders is assessed in terms of their effectiveness in such contacts. (7) Certainly a leader must be a capable reader, writer, and public speaker, and these abilities have received much attention in traditional school programs. The leader's ability in interpersonal communication, on the other hand, has been addressed in higher education but neglected in elementary and secondary schools. This volume suggests how that gap might be filled.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS GIFTED IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP

Although there have been innumerable efforts to describe the characteristics of intellectually and creatively gifted students, little has been done to develop an accurate portrait of students gifted in communication. This may be due both to the relatively recent recognition of the importance of interpersonal communication and to its apparent complexity. One classic study that attempted to formulate a description reported ten characteristics that prevailed among 76 socially gifted high school freshmen: (29)

1. They were generally physically attractive and neat in appearance.
2. They were clearly accepted by an overwhelming majority of the people whom they knew, peers and adults alike.
3. They were generally involved in some sort of social enterprise to which they made positive, constructive contributions.
4. They were generally looked to as arbiters or as "policy makers" in their own group.
5. They related to peers and adults on an egalitarian basis, resisting insincere, artificial, or patronizing relationships.
6. They maintained no facades. Their behavior was nondefensive in character.
7. They appeared free from emotional tension; that is, they were unafraid to express themselves emotionally, but their demonstrations of emotion were always relevant.
8. They maintained enduring relationships with peers and adults. Socially gifted adolescents did not experience rapid turnovers in friendship.
9. They stimulated positive, productive behavior in others.
10. They generally demonstrated an unusual capacity for coping with any social situation. They managed to do so with a delightful mixture of intelligence, humor, and insight.

This list provides a useful start for recognizing the qualities that distinguish these students from their peers. An approach more commonly used today is based on a *functional* view of communication. This view maintains that communication is a tool for fulfilling fundamental life needs and that it serves to carry out several basic functions, whether at home, at school, among friends, or in a work setting.

Research in human motivation and leadership behavior suggests that there are two primary functions of communication. One is a *linking* function that affects how included, how close, and how liked people feel about each other. It is manifested in activities such as developing social bonds, maintaining cohesiveness in a group, achieving intimacy between friends, nurturing satisfaction and morale among coworkers, etc. The other is a *control* function that affects how direction is set, how decisions are made, and how disputes are settled. It is manifested in activities such as exercising power or influence over others, initiating structure in a work group, changing others' opinions or beliefs, accomplishing tasks, making and carrying out decisions, etc.

These two functions operate in a wide range of life situations, and they are critical for leaders. Most "average" individuals are at least "competent" in each domain. Competence implies two qualities: (1) meeting the minimal communicative demands of a situation and (2) exhibiting socially appropriate behavior. (32) Hence, individuals who, as a rule, do not alienate people or act disruptively may be deemed "competent."

Some people exceed these minimal standards. They act so as to enhance or facilitate interpersonal outcomes of linking and control. They do so in ways that meet their own needs without antagonizing others (and even assist others in meeting their own needs). Wiemann (50) states this as "the ability of an interactant to choose among available communication behaviors in order that he may successfully accomplish his own goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and line of his fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation."

This high level of competency, which has been termed "communication effectiveness" (32) is achieved by someone

who hopes to operate at the center of lines of communication—a leader. In fact, giftedness in communication may be viewed as the *sine qua non* of leadership ability. A leader, especially in the large organizations so prevalent in contemporary society, is not simply the person "in charge." Although leaders do direct the activities of subordinates, most also must report to superiors and must coordinate their efforts with peers. Hence, they perform both control and linking functions. A modern leader deals with a full range of communication activities.

Much work has been done to describe able leaders. However, no single trait has

> proved reliably useful for selection of leaders. Research results suggest that the traits and abilities required of a leader tend to vary from one situation to another. The best predictor of leadership is prior success in this role. But a previously successful leader may fail when placed in a situation that imposes demands incompatible with his personality or stabilized pattern of interaction and performance. (44)

In short, current thinking about leadership suggests that leaders must be *appropriately matched* to the people and tasks that define the situations they face. A given leader's success seems to depend upon being at the right place at the right time. This view, termed "contingency theory," maintains that leaders are "effective" (as opposed to merely "competent") only when dealing with "favorable" situations, i.e. those that lie within the limits of their habitual patterns of interaction. (13)

Research evidence generally supports this theory. Most people function best in certain kinds of settings, distinguished primarily by the degree of structure inherent in the situation. (27) Some individuals, however, seem to transcend narrow specialization, can manifest high levels of effectiveness in both linking and controlling functions, and can perform as leaders in a full spectrum of situations. (5)

This latter group may be deemed "gifted leaders." Their patterns of interaction are not stereotyped, stabilized, or rigid. Hence, the essence of giftedness in speech communication and leadership is the capacity to be *effectively flexible.*

This fundamental characteristic requires elaboration. Every communication behavior is made up of two funda-

mental components: (1) a goal, intention, or end state being sought and (2) a method, action, or means for achieving that end state. Thus a communicator acts as a decision maker, a chooser, a self-defining and self-directing entity *and* as an implementer, a technician, a follower of a programmed routine. For example, suppose Mike decides he wants to sell his car to Fred; he puts into practice learned skills of persuasion when talking to Fred. Or suppose Mike wants to get to know Carol better; he puts into practice learned skills of questioning and listening when talking with Carol.

Gifted or effectively flexible communicators have full freedom to choose the ends of interaction they might pursue, and they have available a large repertoire of skills which can be employed to achieve those ends. Children who already show promise of being gifted in communication are those who seem motivated and capable of establishing warm friendships and cooperative work relationships with others (linking function) and who also seem willing to be responsible for structuring or planning and executing their own and group or class work projects (control function).

Children willing to risk wanting and working for intimacy and responsibility must have a sense of their own and others' worth. The range of people and tasks with which they are willing to engage is further evidence of their potential in this area. These qualities of effective flexibility are rooted in both genetic and learned abilities.

They must demonstrate ability to handle language and ideas. Hence, leaders score well on intelligence tests, but not too well. Ghiselli (20) reports, "the relationship between intelligence and managerial success is curvilinear, with those individuals earning both low and very high scores being less likely to achieve success in management positions than those with scores at intermediate levels." Other traits have been found to be more directly related to leadership ability. Those most prominent are "sociability," a predisposition to interact with others (24), and an "achievement motivation" or a desire to excel. (38) In short, the moderately bright child, with a predisposition to socialize and to excel among peers, is likely to be gifted in communication.

More important, perhaps, than innate qualities is a supportive environment that encourages social interaction. The essential elements in such an environment correspond to the basic dimensions of communication described above. The child must be reinforced for developing linkages or close friendships with others, and for exercising control or taking responsibility in group tasks. These children will be notable for choosing to enter a variety of social situations and for skills developed as a result of wide-ranging experience in such settings.

Without a supportive environment, communication giftedness can go unused or go awry. Gallagher (18) affirms that "the accumulation of evidence from studies in child development suggests that there is a subtle and complex interaction between environment and native ability . . . we can create giftedness through designing enriched environments and opportunities, or we can destroy it by failing to create those environments and opportunities. This interaction is especially applicable to communication giftedness. The same talents that are present in a student body president can exist in a street gang leader. Seymour Halleck (22) maintained that the future criminal is usually a person who has little chance to use creative abilities in socially acceptable ways; illegal acts provide ways of using this potential.

Some ethnic groups support the development of communication giftedness. For example, Bernal (4) reports that a study based on extensive surveys in Texas "indicates that Mexican Americans value those cognitive and linguistic abilities in children that are manifested in pragmatic alertness, sensitivity to others, leadership, related interpersonal skills (for example, maturity, expressive style, charm, humor), and bilingual fluency." Other groups have norms that stymie this talent. (47)

All children are raised in a culture, community, school, and home that have some impact on their social self-concept and behavior. The teacher seeking to recognize such abilities must be aware of the many ways sociality and achievement motivation are manifested and must provide opportunities for their expression.

IDENTIFYING STUDENTS GIFTED IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP

In contrast with intellectual operations, communication is an overt, audible, and observable activity. The best way to assess students' abilities in this domain is to watch them and listen to them closely. In order to make accurate assessments, teachers first need some criteria to guide their evaluations. The ages of the students being evaluated must be considered, since abilities develop and expand as children mature. Several researchers have contributed to the understanding of age-related communication competencies.

Burton White (49) studied 100 three- to six-year-old children as they coped socially and intellectually with people, situations, and objects in their everyday surroundings. His conclusions took the form of a series of distinguishing behavioral talents of the well-developed six-year-old:

1. Gains and maintains the attention of adults in socially acceptable ways
2. Uses adults as resources when a task is clearly too difficult
3. Expresses both affection and hostility to adults
4. Assumes control in peer-related activities or follows the lead of others
5. Expresses both affection and hostility to peers
6. Competes with peers—that is, exhibits interpersonal competition
7. Praises oneself and/or shows pride in one's accomplishments
8. Involves oneself in adult role-playing behaviors or otherwise expresses the desire to grow up.

Allen and Brown (1) conducted a literature search of communication skills in children ages six to twelve. To the previous list add the following skills:

1. Gives evidence of opinion to support a claim
2. Presents a variety of arguments to support a plan of action
3. Takes into account another person's point-of-view in talking with that person, especially if asked to do so
4. Presents and understands information in messages related to objects and processes not immediately visible
5. Reads effectively the feedback of others to one's messages; supplies relevant feedback to others when they communicate.

Barbara Wood (53) adds to this a list of several other competencies that mark a socially talented adolescent:

1. Evaluates the messages of others critically and makes appropriate comments regarding such evaluations
2. Takes the role of another person effectively without being pushed to do so
3. Constructs contrary-to-face propositions
4. Presents a conceptualization of one's own thoughts, as well as the thoughts of others
5. Gives, as well as understands, complex referential messages; adapts referential messages to the needs of others.

A more global list of behaviors related to leadership ability was compiled by Renzulli (42), and this list is used as a rating scale to assess students' abilities in this area at all grade levels. Teachers are asked to rate each student for each item listed below. Ratings range from one to four and indicate that the teacher: (1) seldom or never observed this characteristic, (2) observed this characteristic occasionally, (3) observed it to a considerable degree, (4) observed it almost all of the time.

1. Carries responsibility well; can be counted on to do what he has promised and usually does it well
2. Is self-confident with children his own age as well as adults; seems comfortable when asked to show his work to the class
3. Seems to be well liked by his classmates
4. Is cooperative with teacher and classmates; tends to avoid bickering and is generally easy to get along with
5. Can express himself well; has good verbal facility and is usually well understood
6. Adapts readily to new situations; is flexible in thought and action and does not seem disturbed when the normal routine is changed
7. Seems to enjoy being around other people; is sociable and prefers not to be alone
8. Tends to dominate others when they are around; generally directs the activity in which he is involved
9. Participates in most social activities connected with the school; can be counted on to be there if anyone is
10. Excels in athletic activities; is well coordinated and enjoys all sorts of athletic games.

There are three shortcomings in the observational categories listed here. The first is that a long-term acquaintance

with the students is required if the teacher is to observe these behaviors. The second is that students are not always allowed opportunities to manifest these behaviors. The third is that the items all refer to overt, pro-social behavior. This limitation excludes from selection those students who may have leadership abilities but do not find the classroom an environment in which to demonstrate their interest or abilities. These individuals may be the playgroup leaders, the rebels, minority group members, the temporarily shy or reticent students, or the gang leaders. To identify these students other methods are needed. Winter (52) used several methods in his study of power motivation. These can be adapted for use in assessing students' communication styles. The methods listed here give insights into leadership potential:

1. Showing ambiguous pictures to students and asking them to describe what they see portrayed. Examples of the pictures are: (a) seven men variously grouped around a conference table and (b) two girls reading newspapers. The questions asked to elicit the description are: (a) What is happening? Who are the people?; (b) What has led up to this situation? That is, what has happened in the past?; (c) What is thought? What is wanted? By whom?; (d) What will happen? What will be done? The responses students give are rated according to the frequency with which power or leadership issues appear. Examples of those included in this rating are points at which: (a) Someone performs actions that indicate power—e.g., threats or assaults, unsolicited advice or help, controlling or regulating other's life, persuading or arguing, impressing others; (b) someone does something that arouses strong positive or negative emotions in others; (c) someone is described as having a concern for his reputation or position. Students with the highest frequency of such references would be those most oriented toward leadership.
2. Asking students to complete the following task:

   "If your life could go according to your plans and hopes, what would it be like in, say, twenty

years? Please write out a brief description in the space below. Obviously your career plans would be an important part of this description, but try to mention other plans also."

These plans are then rated according to the degree to which students visualize leader roles for themselves in the future.

3. Asking students to complete a questionnaire that calls for a value judgment, such as selecting from a list of ten personality traits the three most essential for a person who wishes to be a good friend or leader. Next, ask students to form into groups of five members and as a group agree on a single set of three traits by comparing and discussing their individual choices. They must follow three rules: (a) work as a group; (b) do not elect a formal discussion leader; (c) do not take formal votes to reach your decision, but rely instead on consensus. After this process is completed, or a reasonable period of time has passed (about 20 minutes), ask each person to complete a questionnaire containing the following items:
    1. Who most influenced the other participants? (You may include yourself when answering these questions.)
    2. Who most clearly defined the problems?
    3. Who offered the best solutions to the problems?
    4. Who worked the hardest to get the job done and come to a good conclusion?
    5. Who encouraged the others to participate?
    6. Whom do you like best? (Do not include yourself on this one.)
    7. Who tried to keep the group running smoothly, and who encouraged cooperation?
    8. Overall, who was the "leader" in this group?

    The responses of those students with a propensity toward leadership will be distinctive and evident.

Teachers need not be the only individuals who observe

and assess students' communication abilities. Parents of very young children have been found to be quite capable of providing useful information about their children's social behavior—sometimes better information, in fact, than kindergarten teachers assigned the same task. (28) Parent reports are most meaningful if parents are asked to provide examples of their child's actual behaviors rather than estimate their child's ability level. (47)

Classmates are another source of useful data. Schoolmates have played and worked together in a variety of situations and thus have a vivid sense of their peers' social effectiveness. Jarecky (29) found a high correlation between high school students' ratings of each other, their teachers' ratings of them (0.71), and classroom observers' ratings of their social effectiveness (0.66).

Jarecky used two forms of sociometric instruments. One was a "groupmate selection questionnaire" that asked students to identify those members of the class with whom they prefer to associate when dealing with some part of the term's work. Questions students might be asked are, "If you were planning a task, with whom would you choose to work?" and "If you had to work in a group that had a major job to complete, whom would you like to have serve as your leader?"

Another method is called the "Guess Who?" questionnaire. For this instrument a series of statements must be prepared describing social behavior. (These could be developed for a specific grade level by using some of the items on pp. 13-14). Students are then given the following directions:

> Below are some word pictures of members of your class. Read each statement and write down the names of the persons whom you think the descriptions fit. One description may fit several persons. You may write as many names as you think belong under each. The same person may be mentioned for more than one description. Write "myself' if you think the description fits you. If you cannot think of anyone to match a particular description, go on to the next one.

Sometimes, these items are presented as couplets, one presenting a positive, the other a negative aspect of the target behavior. For example,

1. Someone who picks appropriate times to talk with you.
2. Someone who wants your attention when you would rather not give it.

The students' nominations can be tallied to identify those most gifted in communication.

A final method used by some to identify speech communication and leadership abilities is by means of standardized self-report instruments. For example, in the state of Idaho (one of 26 states that currently include students capable of high performance in leadership ability within their definition of the gifted and talented), the following four measures are suggested to identify these individuals: The Barclay Classroom Climate Inventory, the Bonney-Fessondon Sociogram, the Junior-Senior High School Personality Questionnaire (for grades 7-12), and the Vineland Social Maturity Scale (for all ages). (55)

There are some difficulties with the standardized instrument, however. Jarecky (29) obtained scores of social ability from the Vineland Social Maturity Scale, a self-concept composition that was entitled "The Sort of Person I Am," and the ACE Psychological Examination. Correlations generally were poor among these scores and the students' and teachers' ratings of actual social behavior. What students think or write on such measures does not necessarily reflect their manifest ability to interact with others. Furthermore, these instruments can represent an unnecessary strain on student time and the school budget. People in actual social contact with the students' being evaluated seem to be the best sources of data regarding their effectiveness.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING THE GIFTED IN ORAL COMMUNICATION

This chapter deals with *purposes*, *procedures*, and *programs* for teaching students gifted in communication. The *purposes* section discusses the general directions or goals for communication instruction aimed at the gifted. The *practices* section suggests methods for achieving those goals, methods especially applicable for gifted students. The *programs* section deals with integrating those methods into the classroom setting.

Communication education for the gifted can take place in four formats: (1) in classes especially designated for students gifted in communication, (2) in procedures applied to intellectually gifted students enrolled in speech communication classes, (3) in classes especially for intellectually gifted students that have an oral communication component, (4) in regular classes dealing with any subject, when teachers wish to enhance gifted students' abilities to communicate effectively about that material. Most of what follows is relevant in all four contexts. Where a method applies to only one or two contexts, those limitations are specifically noted.

Purposes

Choice Making

The basic goal of all communication education for the gifted is to enhance effective flexibility. That goal applies to the two major stages of a communication act: (1) the ends or goals to be pursued and (2) the means or skills used to achieve those ends. Each stage must be considered in a comprehensive instructional program (although too often only one or the other is emphasized), and each is approached in a very different way.

At the point when individuals decide what state of affairs they wish to achieve in their interactions with others, they are most effective when they act as conscious choice makers instead of feeling compelled to carry out a rigid "script." When it comes to choosing what we want to have happen with our friends, family, or work partners, we stand at a crossroads with many alternatives before us. The choices we make are influenced by our concepts of what relationship states are possible, what we ourselves are capable of doing, what motivates other people, etc. (See also 48, chapter 2.)

Often, however, individuals are not aware of the variety of choices available. For example, they may perceive themselves as capable of only certain forms of interaction (e.g., "I've got to be in control" or "I can't be assertive"). They may perceive that only certain forms of relationships are possible (e.g., "You can't be friends with your employees or students" or "Girls can't be leaders"). Or they may see

others in stereotypical ways (e.g., "People only work hard when they are scared" or "Boys always want to dominate"). Among gifted communicators these limitations must be transcended. They must be seen as artificial, unnecessary barriers. Effective leaders recognize and consider the full range of choices available to them.

For this goal of instruction, a "humanistic" approach is most appropriate as it affirms our freedom to choose, to decide our own fate, and to give self-determined meaning to our lives. This approach recognizes the crucial role that our belief systems play in how we view our options, including our self-concept and our sense of what human potential can be. In social interaction many limitations are culturally imposed, and humanistic instructional systems are aimed at understanding and overcoming these arbitrary limits. When one's belief system is enlarged, learning can be virtually "transformational." That is, all of the elements involved in human transaction can be redefined: ourselves, other people, our purposes and the methods we have available for dealing with them. We then can use all of our natural talents freely and flexibly when communicating.

This realm of instruction involves increasing students' awareness of the beliefs that they bring to the communication process. The first area to be examined is their conception of self. In their early environment most people are conditioned by "significant others" (parents, friends, etc.) to be a certain way (e.g., "polite and respectful," "a go-getter," etc.). These people then approach interactions with the fixed intention of acting and being seen as this kind of person. In doing so, they deny themselves the freedom to choose what can happen or what they can do in social exchanges. To break those bonds and become capable of choosing among all the possible outcomes and modes of self-presentation (i.e., to gain the foundation needed to be gifted communicators), they must become aware of how they have been limiting themselves. (Methods for doing so appear in the Procedures section.)

Once their existing self-concepts are clear to them, students can *decide for themselves* whether or not they wish to change these self-concepts. This decision might be based on whether or not these self-concepts contribute to their

sense of well-being, enhance their ability to meet their needs through social interaction, or are congruent with their interests and talents during the current period in their lives.

A second dimension of belief systems is the concept students have about what can happen in human interaction. Values clarification theory (43a) provides clues for analyzing these patterns of thought. It is suggested that any prevalent behaviors in one's life, especially those involving relationships with others, be subject to scrutiny using a series of questions. These include: Is this action freely chosen from available alternatives? Have I considered the consequences of each alternative? and Do I prize and am I willing to publicly affirm my action? Other questions students might ask are: What is the worst thing that could happen in my relationship with each of the people I relate to most? Why do I fear that outcome? What is the best thing that could happen? To what extent do I pursue that outcome actively? Questions like these help students see what states or conditions they habitually pursue and compare them to what they ideally might like to achieve—thereby enlarging their vision of what is possible in human relationships. (See Appendix I for a full list of questions.)

Finally, students need to examine their beliefs about what methods are available for use in social interaction. Some students think a leader must be tough, distant, stern, authoritarian. Others believe leaders must be understanding, warm, considerate, democratic. Each of these approaches is effective in a limited range of situations. There are tasks and settings when one style is more appropriate than the other, and sometimes within a single situation a leader must shift from one style to the other. Gifted communicators see value in each orientation, identify the approach they are more likely to use by dint of their personality and past experience, see that approach as only one of several options available to them (instead of saying "That's me, that's the way I must do things"), and endeavor to learn when and how to use the other styles of leadership.

Thus in the decision stage of communication, gifted communicators are not unthinking, programmed robots. They recognize their power of choice. The first major goal of instruction is to encourage students to act freely and re-

sponsibly. This goal requires awareness and examination of the belief systems that have been guiding (and often unnecessarily limiting) students' behavior.

Skill Development

Once intentions exist, communicators must develop methods for achieving their goals. Gifted communicators are armed with available *knowledge* about how communication behaviors affect others, and they have mastered the *skills* needed to carry out these behaviors effectively. For example, if it is one's intention to help a friend deal with an upsetting situation, that individual will be most effective if he or she knows basic counseling approaches and is able to put these into practice.

There have been many attempts to analyze and list the skills a leader might want to employ when interacting with others. The skills listed below, developed from a review of the literature on leadership, are ordered in a rough continuum that is anchored by the two major functions of communication: linking and control.

A. *Initiating and managing social interaction*—meeting and getting to know others; making appropriate comments to keep conversations going, rather than leaving long, awkward pauses, interrupting often, or ignoring others; asking questions to draw others out; and relating one's own comments to the comments of others.

B. *Disclosing, sharing information about oneself appropriately*—relating the "here and now" of an interaction of one's past experiences to what is occurring; being seen as genuine, open, unguarded.

C. *Showing empathy or understanding of what others think and feel*—indicating that one is listening attentively; trying to comprehend others' messages as they are intended; checking out the accuracy of one's understanding periodically.

D. *Dealing with feelings*—recognizing the role of affective energies in relationships; allowing the arousal and full expression of emotions in oneself and others.

E. *Deepening relationships*—allowing closeness, vulnerability, intimacy with others; forming interdependent, close-knit, lasting friendships.

F. *Experimenting with interactions*—employing creative behaviors such as role-playing, fantasizing, speculating, dramatizing, theorizing, and storytelling; using "growth" experiences such as support groups, human relations workshops, and other challenging or expansive learning methods.

G. *Being assertive*—not being habitually dominant or passive, "owning" one's views, rather than repressing them; not pressuring or accusing others to achieve an artificial agreement.

H. *Wording ideas concretely and clearly*—expressing viewpoints in vivid, specific terms so that others can visualize them accurately; not being habitually vague or abstract; not resorting to "I can't express it"; taking a clear position and explaining it with illustrative examples.

I. *Being confident and relaxed*—interacting in an easy, flowing manner, tolerant of diversity and ambiguity in others; being generally calm and patient in interaction; not tense, hurried, clipped, or abrupt.

J. *Structuring or planning problem-solving activities*—delegating responsibilities; defining and assigning roles; clarifying problems, identifying criteria; eliciting proposed solutions; comparing and selecting solutions; developing action plans.

K. *Persuading, influencing others*—building agreement among people by arguing for a point of view; changing others' positions without making them feel diminished or "wrong."

L. *Supporting, praising, "stroking" others*—communicating one's concern for others' welfare; encouraging and reinforcing others; affirming others' worth and the value of their efforts.

M. *Critiquing, confronting, challenging others*—pro-

viding feedback in ways that are perceived as helpful: pointing out the discrepancy between what others' have done and what they've agreed to do, what the job requires, or what they have the potential to do.

N. *Negotiating, resolving interpersonal conflicts*—bargaining; clarifying differences among viewpoints and exploring approaches to accepting or reconciling them; developing compromise or collaborative agreements in conflict situations.

Gifted communicators have the awareness, confidence, knowledge, and ability to choose consciously and freely why and how they interact. One does not "master" a value, nor are each of the steps in a skill "chosen." We choose our values and master the requisite skills. Both stages and the approach to learning best suited to each stage must be included in any program for gifted communicators.

Procedures

The methods described in this section are intended to enhance the quality of communication beyond basic competency to the level of giftedness; that is, they are intended to help students achieve effective flexibility. They call upon advanced cognitive skills, require insight and creativity, and develop traits characteristic of capable leaders.

Learning How To Learn

No school program can supply gifted communicators with all they need to know. The personal, work, community, and societal roles they will be filling will require mastery of many more skills than they can accumulate in even the most comprehensive course of study. If students are to meet those challenges when they arise, they need to learn how to acquire new skills on their own, without the supports provided by a structured educational program.

Communication is an art for which everyday life provides an unusually rich variety of potential learning experiences. Every time one individual encounters another (especially if the interaction isn't simply a brief or ritualized one) and either participant feels some investment, chal-

lenge, or uncertainty about the outcome, a learning opportunity exists. There are three fundamental ways students can be encouraged to learn on their own from the communication situations that arise naturally in their everyday lives:

1. The first is simply by *having the experience.* People tend to stick to the communication partners and situations where interaction is most effortless, where success seems assured. This, however, limits growth. Their capacities will expand if they deliberately put themselves in more demanding contexts. Whenever a person seems obnoxious to them, or when a situation creates a knot of tension in their stomachs, they should be urged to consider "hanging in there" and exposing themselves to that threatening stimulus. In doing so they will experience, and perhaps begin to understand and overcome, the barrier it creates within them.
2. The second is by *reviewing interactions* in their minds immediately after they have occurred and identifying what "worked" and what went awry. This review process applies both to situations that seem to turn out well and to those that feel unsatisfying. In either case, the procedure for analysis is to hypothesize an effect-to-cause sequence. In other words, the first question to ask is "How did that interaction turn out?" or "What was the *effect* of the other individuals' behavior on me and on them?" The next question is "What do I think *caused* or contributed to that effect?" Consider such elements as what was said, nonverbal behavior, environmental circumstances, expectations within each participant, etc. It must be kept in mind that the cause-effect formuli derived from such analyses are based on only one experience and that generalizations about other people and other situations must remain tentative. However, it is through such review and analysis (rather than just feeling proud of successes or disappointed about failures) that a gifted communicator continues to grow in awareness and skill.

3. The third method is by overtly *asking* other people about their experience in a shared interaction. The gifted communicator looks for opportunities to inquire of people who are open to this kind of dialogue, "How do you feel about our relationship?" "What do I do that contributes to it positively?" "What do I do that detracts?" These questions are better if they are phrased more specifically to relate to a particular situation. Another approach is to be alert for chances to ask people who have had more experience in a particular kind of encounter (especially one that the inquirer has not yet experienced) to share how they *handled* it and what they *learned* from it. It is important to get the data (the report of actual events) before asking for interpretations about the "meaning" of those experiences. The listener is then able to judge how applicable these conclusions are to his or her own experiences, depending on how likely one is to handle those encounters in the same way.

Encourage students to see everyday social interaction as a plentiful source of learning experiences and to use these experiences productively. This will continue to enhance their effectiveness as communicators in classroom and extracurricular activities.

Teacher-Student Interaction

There have been only a few scattered studies identifying characteristics of teachers who are particularly effective in working with gifted students. (19) The trait most often identified is being "accepting" rather than critical. An accepting posture can be particularly important for speech communication teachers. The notion of nurturing communication giftedness is a new one. Surveys report that many teachers rate as most important for their classrooms those social skills concerned with order, rules, obedience, and responsibility. They attach less value to skills that involve taking initiative and being outgoing and assertive in interpersonal relationships. (8) Consequently, socially active students are likely to be penalized, rather than rewarded, in

most classes. Hence, the speech or leadership class must provide a refuge, a support system for these students. They are very likely to clash with "authorities" or authoritative people and need someone who will listen to them and understand them. Otherwise, they are apt to conclude that there is no room within the "system" to express their urge to relate to others, and they may come to view themselves as troublemakers, misfits, or "outlaws" whose arena for achievement must be outside the "establishment" or mainstream of society.

Many teachers may find it difficult to provide this kind of compassion. Jacobs (28) maintains that the gifted often have personality characteristics of older children, and thus are subject to misunderstanding. He found that the gifted are likely to rely less on adults, dispute the concept of absolute goodness and badness, and be more sensitive and self-reliant. He suggests that these traits can lead to problems with teachers who may view these students negatively because they differ from their classmates and are less likely to do everything the teacher says.

Torrance (45) discusses the case of John, a sixth-grader who was the ringleader of a group of known vandals who were damaging the school. John's teacher recognized his talent for organizing and leading the other boys in the class, and she arranged with the student council to have John appointed chairman of the lunchroom committee. John organized his committee of boys to help the janitor move tables, clean up, and manage the lunchroom. They did this task well and began to take on other group projects that served the entire school. The vandalism stopped, and John's schoolwork in general improved greatly. All of this occurred because that teacher recognized and found positive outlets for his leadership abilities. It therefore behooves teachers of speech to be especially attuned to and supportive of communication talents, even when they are not at first expressed in ways harmonious with the smooth functioning of the school system.

Experiential Learning

That which is learned in regard to the communication process is used differently than material learned in other

subject areas. One study of leadership behavior noted that leaders are plagued by interruptions and activities of short duration, with half of their activities lasting about nine minutes each. (36) Leadership skills often are used in the midst of hectic, stressful events—situations that must be handled on the spot, spontaneously, as they occur. Interpersonal crises cannot be initiated, interrupted, or terminated at will. Communication skills must be employed in conversations without recourse to notes, books, or other external sources of information.

Knowledge or skills to be applied with such immediacy must be learned deeply. They must be internalized thoroughly so that they can be brought to bear the instant they are needed. This kind of learning is best conducted via involvement in experiences that are as close as possible to those the student will face—that is, experientially, through actual in- and out-of-class conversations. Kaplan (31) stressed that gifted students learn most effectively by engaging in projects that stimulate thinking, are action-oriented, and provide options for individual differences. Experiential learning meets these criteria.

We may divide all learning experiences roughly into two categories: active and passive (sometimes called "discovery" and "receptive" learning). The latter category involves learning by reading and listening to messages planned, structured, prepared, and delivered by others. This approach is singularly linear and verbal in presentation. Information obtained in this way is systematically inappropriate for application in actual communication situations, for oral transactions are inherently holographic (multidimensional) and are influenced by many factors that are never overtly verbalized.

Experiential or "discovery" learning includes a variety of activities that should be incorporated in any program dealing with communication and leadership for gifted students. Some of these activities are:

1. *Observing* others communicate. Social comparison research has shown that people learn many behavioral patterns from models, from watching others interact. In the classroom, students can observe others

talking; outside they can be asked to visit and observe people in situations similar to those in which they would like to improve their skills.

2. *Practicing* the communication behaviors that interest them. Engaging in an activity can generate insights into what that activity involves. Role-playing employs this principle and can be used in the classroom. Outside the classroom students can actually try out communication skills that need improvement and then report what they learned from this trial.
3. Receiving *feedback* from others about their communication behavior. Classroom observers can provide feedback, or when focused feedback is encouraged it can be offered in a discussion following structured exercises. Outside of class, students can be asked to interview trusted friends about how they are seen as communicators.
4. *Introspection* or reconsideration of past or imagined situations. Much can be gained by tying together one's past experiences to glean the meaning from them. Nearly all therapists use this tool. Imagined or fantasized situations also yield clues to self-awareness.
5. Manipulating what interests them *creatively*. When one draws a model or writes a story or play about a communication situation, one can gain a clearer picture of what is occurring.
6. *Teaching* someone else what they already know. This process helps students better understand and use whatever is being taught. (For examples of assignments under these headings see pp. 48-55.)

Individualized Learning

The term "gifted" or even "gifted communicator" can be misused if one assumes a great deal of commonality among the individuals so labelled. Kaplan (30) applies this caveat to language arts instruction:

> Language arts experiences and expectations for the gifted are sometimes related to characteristics of giftedness as if

those characteristics were absolute, constant, and possessed only by gifted persons. Consequently, curriculum experiences and expectations of performance are tailored to a stereotypical description of giftedness rather than to an analysis of the entry skills, abilities, and interests of the individual gifted student.

The need to account for individual differences among students in planning educational programs is especially pronounced in the teaching of communication. A student enters a class in interpersonal communication carrying deeply embedded attitudes and habits developed during a lifetime of experience. In fact, each student has a *unique* life history. No two people grow up under identical conditions. Every individual has been in contact with a network of significant people who have shaped his or her thinking and behavior when relating to others.

In addition, while taking the class, each student has specific relationships to which he or she would like to apply the material that is being learned. If new awareness is to be maximally meaningful, it must be transferable to one's current position vis-à-vis family, friends, and others. Similarly, the specific personal and professional future that each student foresees can have distinct implications for his or her communication needs.

In sum, all students have different pasts, presents, and anticipated futures that markedly influence how they will perceive and react to their experiences in studying interpersonal communication. Teaching that attempts to redirect a student's daily or lifelong patterns, that ignores a student's past and current phenomenal world, that seeks change where no need for change is felt—such teaching is doomed to failure. Only an intensely *individualized* approach is suited to this discipline.

Three fundamental steps are essential in carrying out such an approach. The first step is *diagnostic*, answering the questions, "What are this student's unique strengths and needs?" and "What knowledge, attitudes, and habits does this student bring to this learning encounter?" The second step is *programmatic*, answering the question, "What learning experiences are best suited to meeting this student's needs?" The third step is *evaluative*, answering the question,

"How is this student's achievement in learning appropriately evaluated and graded?" Each of these steps will be explored in turn.

1. *Diagnosis.* The methods described previously in the "Identification" section also can be used as approaches to individualized diagnosis of communication abilities. All of those methods, however, depended on the teacher or peers to make an assessment of the learner. Here we will examine how learners themselves can help identify their own needs and ways to meet those needs.

There are several ways of doing this. One way is to give students a list of communication skills (such as the ones on pp. 22-24) and ask them to select from that list the ones in which they would like to become more effective. The chart on page 32 can be used to identify the skills that currently are most relevant.

The inner circle of the chart represents the student, and each of the outer circles represents a person (or group) that students deal with in the course of their daily lives. The student should fill in the name of that person on the line alongside the circle. The skills that *they would like to use more* with each person could be noted in the semicircles in the center area, and those they would like to *encourage in others* could be noted in the outer circles.

After these entries are made, students can see at once the needs in their current relationships. They can choose to work on the skill(s) that will yield the most benefit. This method of choosing motivates involvement in learning. Clearly the energy to improve the chosen skill(s) is implicit in the dissatisfaction the student feels about certain relationships. Here the dissatisfaction is transformed into a positive force for improving ability to cope effectively.

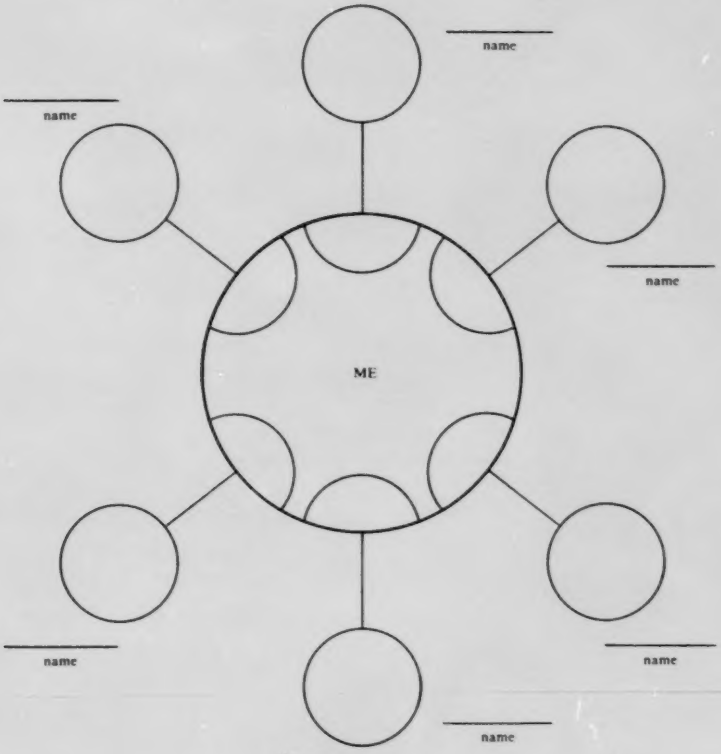
Before beginning to work on specific communication skills, students might take a further diagnostic step. Students gifted in communication all have past life experiences, current thoughts and feelings and behavioral habits, and future plans. Students must be aware that they carry this "baggage" as they address whatever skill they want to develop. Hence, work in communication might begin with a period of *introspection.* Appendix I provides a list of questions and activities from which students can select (or which

can be assigned, as appropriate) to assist in clarifying their orientation vis-à-vis the skill area to be explored.

2. *Programs.* There are two fundamental ways that "advanced" learning experiences can be provided for gifted students: "vertical progression" and "horizontal expansion." Vertical progression is most applicable in subject areas with a closed system of knowledge, like mathematics. In these disciplines a linear, hierarchical, step-by-step learning sequence is possible. Horizontal expansion applies to subject areas, like communication, that have open systems of knowledge. Open systems are those that "create themselves

Figure 1

Self-Assessment Chart



in response to the challenge of the environment." (39) Advanced work in such a discipline moves primarily along "the horizontal dimension [which] includes activities that further practice of learned skills, concepts, and generalizations. The focus is on application of acquired knowledge." (30) Consequently, students gifted in communication need experience in applying what they are learning to a wide variety of contexts or environments.

The "environment" of a communication act includes the people involved, the tasks to be done, and the settings for the interaction. The curriculum should provide opportunities for horizontal expansion along each of these dimensions.

For example, the *people involved* in an interaction can differ in several ways. One way is simply by their number. The dynamics of interaction between two people differ from the dynamics among three people, and these kinds of interactions are different from interactions among small groups of four, five, or six people, and so on. As the size of the group increases, individual members have less opportunity to talk and to attempt to lead. Hence, fewer members initiate leadership acts. (23) Leaders wield more influence on decisions in smaller groups, and larger groups demand more skill of the leader. Therefore in groups comprised of up to five members everyone has a chance to practice leadership functions, and in groups of six or more the gifted leaders can emerge and develop their skills.

Other "people" factors can be varied to provide horizontal expansion for gifted communicators. Each option has its own rewards and costs in terms of student learning. Some options are:

1. Designating a leader *vs.* having the group elect one *vs.* simply allowing leadership to emerge
2. Allowing students to pick those who will be in their groups *vs.* forming groups of different types of people (e.g., boys/girls, outgoing/shy, intellectually/socially gifted) *vs.* forming groups of similar people who are likely to cooperate easily
3. Maintaining stable group membership over a period of time *vs.* changing group membership often.

The *tasks* required of students also must be varied to

increase opportunities to practice effective flexibility. The two major categories are problem-solving tasks and personal growth tasks. Problem-solving tasks focus on issues external to the students. Personal growth tasks deal with the students' own subjective experiences.

Some examples of problem-solving tasks are:

1. Single right answer puzzles
2. Bipolar issues (e.g., debates, forced choices among designated options)
3. Multioption issues (e.g., "What are the qualities of an effective leader?" or "How can our school provide more opportunities for student involvement in decision making?")

Each task involves different interaction dynamics and should be experienced by gifted communicators.

Personal growth tasks can involve:

1. Sharing individuals' past experiences around a common theme (e.g., "a time I went along with a group and regretted it" or "the person I have most trouble getting along with")
2. Discussing a particular problem an individual student currently has in dealing with someone in or out of school
3. Sharing perceptions of each other in the class (e.g., "what I thought you were like when I first met you" or "something you did that made me feel really good").

These types of tasks greatly enhance students' ability to carry out linking functions of communication.

Tasks can be designed to fall anywhere along a continuum, from unstructured to highly structured and from personal to socio-political in content. Examples of points along this line are:

1. "Spend the next 15 minutes of group time discussing the qualities of a good friend or a good president or a good energy policy"
2. "Develop a list of five qualities of a good friend, etc."
3. "When you meet in your group elect a leader who

will ask each person to give their qualities of a good friend, etc. Discuss these qualities for 15 minutes. Leaders then will report to the class on the five qualities your group has decided are most important."

The skills required to deal with unstructured tasks differ greatly from those needed for structured situations; gifted communicators need to master both.

The *settings or contexts* for interactions can also vary markedly and students should be given experience in a number of these settings:

1. Informal interactions, which can occur at students' desks as they chat for social reasons or in the course of working on a group project
2. Formal discussions, such as a panel discussion held in front of the room
3. Simulations of interactions that might occur outside of class, such as a job interview or a sales pitch
4. Communication projects in community settings, such as those requiring students to interview members of their families or public officials
5. Communication projects requiring students to observe or talk with people who interact in precise, technical ways (e.g., firefighters, computer analysts, factory workers) and those who interact over open-ended problems (e.g., city planners, police officers, business executives)
6. Communication projects requiring that students spend time with senior citizens, younger children, or people of their own race or sex who occupy positions that break stereotypical patterns (e.g., househusbands, women executives, minority business owners)
7. Communication projects requiring that students go out and meet new people or spend an extended period of time outside the class with one of their classmates in order to deepen their relationship (see section on Independent Study Projects).

In all of these various interactions, students grow more familiar with and more able to apply what they have learned

in class to the full variety of communication situations they are likely to encounter in the future.

3. *Evaluation.* It is difficult to evaluate and grade students, especially gifted students, in a communication class. The traditional means for evaluation is comparative. One student's individual achievement is compared to that of others, in the same class or grade level; a determination is made of how that student's work compares with the work of others, and praise or criticism and a grade are given on that basis.

We have already discussed how it is inappropriate to generalize about or compare students in regard to their skills in interpersonal communication. One factor, peculiar to this subject area, makes such comparisons self-defeating. Whenever students are aware that they are being compared and graded, a *competitive* system is set up. This competition becomes especially keen among students whose grades will influence career plans. In other subject areas, competition may occasionally stimulate learning, but in an interpersonal communication course competition is almost always destructive.

Here, more than in any other class, students must use one another for learning. Interaction and feedback must be as honest and as open as possible. Thus, *cooperation* should be sought and competition discouraged. This demands that each student be evaluated and graded on the basis of individual merit, regardless of the performance of others.

An evaluation mechanism that meets this criterion is a "contract." There is wide latitude in creating contracts used in a communication class. All such contracts should have some common elements, such as a list of objectives and a set of minimum expectations that must be met by every student. These expectations might include attendance, test scores, and performances or projects.

For gifted students, teachers should make available a distinct set of projects that call for the use of higher level cognitive processes, that challenge students' ability in creative thinking, that call for deeper self-awareness, or that expose students to a wider range of learning resources. (Examples of such assignments appear in the section on Independent Study Projects.) Students then select from

these assignments those most appropriate to their needs and those that will earn them the grade for which they are willing and able to work. Grades can be awarded on the basis of two criteria: the *complexity* of the tasks chosen and the *quality* with which the work is done.

Levels of complexity can be determined by referring to a standard such as Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain (see 48, chapter 3). Assignments that call for use of more basic cognitive processes are grouped together, and the student must complete a certain number to earn a passing or "C" grade. Other assignments that call for cognitive processes higher in the taxonomy (e.g., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) are part of a group from which tasks must be selected to earn a better grade. Thus the grading system is structured to require increasingly demanding tasks, not to simply do more of the same.

The quality of student performance must be assessed as well. Despite the need for student self-direction, feedback from the teacher is essential if students are to know how well they have done and how they may continue to fulfill their potential. This feedback must not reflect judgment of what students should learn. It should focus on how well or how thoroughly students have used the learning experiences in the contract. The feedback should be based on answers to questions such as "Did the student draw the maximum number of inferences from observations, practice, feedback, introspection, etc.?" The teacher cannot judge the validity of what the student learned from the experiences but can make statements about the *process* of learning. The teacher can (1) point out significant omissions, overgeneralizations, misunderstandings, etc.; (2) raise questions about issues that seem to have been overlooked or oversimplified; (3) praise obviously painstaking effort and subtle insights; and (4) suggest further sources of information and activities.

It is difficult to simplify this kind of evaluation into a letter or number grade. If either kind of grade *must* be reported, it can be determined by using a point system in which students earn points for successfully completing a graduated series of increasingly challenging assignments. Thus student work is graded as either "satisfactory" (with comments about specific points that seem outstanding, and students

earn the points allocated for that task), or "unsatisfactory" (with comments that point out shortcomings and provide questions or suggestions for additional work that will improve the quality of the work or make the experience more productive).

In sum, evaluation should focus on how insightfully and how comprehensively assignments were completed in ways relevant to the course goals and to the students' own communicative needs—not in comparison to what others in the class have done.

Such a system has several inherent advantages. Requirements are made clear at the start. The student can approach the work knowing that conclusions reached can be related to his or her own view of the world; conclusions need not please the teacher. Students set their own goals, choose the most meaningful tasks from the options available, and carry out these tasks thoroughly. If any projects are deemed inadequate, students learn how to improve them and resubmit them.

Programs

Traditionally schools have provided two main kinds of opportunities for students gifted in communication: (1) elective courses in the field of communication that deal with specific events (e.g., persuasive speaking) and with advanced material (e.g., argumentation) and (2) extracurricular forensics activities (e.g., debate, extemporaneous speaking, oral interpretation of literature). These programs provide valuable educational experiences, and many sources are available regarding the planning and conduct of each.* This section, however, focuses on several less common approaches to the development of advanced abilities in communication and leadership.

Skill-Development

People can sense when one person is a more skillful communicator than another, even if they cannot explain

* See especially the journal *Communication Education* and the T.R.I.P. booklets (Theory and Research into Practice) published by ERIC/RCS Speech Communication Module, Suite 1001, 5205 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia 22041.

why. This is because social talk is guided by tacitly held "rules" that govern the encoding of messages. Members of a culture have common rules for producing socially meaningful utterances, for combining them into socially sensible sequences, and for ordering the sequences within a system of "turntakings." Such rules vary according to the purpose and context of the interaction. (34) Even elementary age children have a sense of the underlying patterns or rules in social interaction. (43)

But sensitivity to the rules isn't enough. Connolly and Bruner (9) suggest a four-component model of competence: (1) *developing* a repertoire of communication acts, (2) *selecting* from that repertoire the most appropriate communication acts according to criteria, (3) *implementing* these communication choices effectively through verbal and nonverbal means, and (4) *evaluating* these communication attempts according to elements of appropriateness and effectiveness. A skill development program must consider each of these phases.

1. *A repertoire of communication acts* is complete only when the user is capable of carrying out the essential functions of communication: linking and control.

Students themselves can determine what communication functions they need to address (see pp. 22-24), or the teacher can observe the natural dialogue of students in a variety of locations—in class, on the playground, in the lunchroom—noting issues and patterns that suggest a need for improving a skill needed to carry out a function. (26)

A few basic rules for the target function need to be articulated at a level suited to the learners. Limit these rules to a few brief guidelines that students can keep in mind during interactions. Goldstein et al. (21) offer abbreviated instructions for several important communications skills. For example, they suggest these guidelines when the goal is to persuade others:

1. Decide on your position and what the other person's is likely to be
2. State your position clearly, completely, and in a way that is acceptable to the other person
3. State what you think the other person's position is

4. Restate your position, emphasizing why it is the better of the two
5. Suggest that the other person consider your position for a while before making a decision.

They go on to propose a procedure for skill development:

1. *Behavioral description*—the skill is broken down into specific behaviors (e.g., the five steps given for "persuading others").
2. *Behavioral rehearsal*—the skill's steps are practiced so that one gradually uses them more effectively. This sequence is recommended:
   a. In imagination—picture oneself using the skill where, when, and with whom it is likely to be applied in the near future.
   b. Openly, alone—say aloud what one actually might say and do in the real-life situation, using a mirror or tape recorder, if possible.
   c. Openly, with someone who is trusted—role-play the situation with a friend. It can be set up in this way:

> First, describe what skill you want to practice and why you would like help. Give your helper all the details you can about the real-life situation in which you eventually want to use the skill—where, when, why, and with which real-life target person. Tell him all about the person to whom you want to express your feelings of anger . . . the individual's name, appearance, characteristics, and, most important, what response this target person is likely to have to you. Tell the person helping you to imitate the other person's behavior as closely as possible while you practice the skill. This is a rehearsal. It's designed to teach you a skill for use where, when, and with whom you really need it. The more realistic the rehearsal, the better your real-life behavior will be. It often will be useful to repeat this rehearsal a number of times, until you feel fully comfortable using your new skill behavior. (21, p. 50)

   d. Openly, with the real-life target person.

3. *Behavioral feedback*—the reaction of another person to one's use of the skill. The rehearsal partner or others can provide answers to the fundamental question: "Did it work? Did I accomplish my goal in using the skill behaviors?"
4. *Behavioral transfer*—the skill is used in the flow of conversation in a variety of situations.

If the skill learning is going slowly or the desired results are not obtained, use the "Troubleshooting Checklist" in Appendix IV to ponder where the learning process went astray.

2. *Criteria for selecting communication skills* are based on the students' goals and their accurate diagnosis of situational demands. For example, *linking* skills are needed in situations where it is important to establish cohesiveness, cooperation, and/or closeness among participants, when participants' enjoyment of the activity is valued, and when participants must choose among many available alternatives and there are reconcilable differences among their attitudes regarding those alternatives. *Control* skills are used when one must take action, especially when it must be done quickly or decisively; when a single clear plan of operation seems evident; and when the situation is so rushed, competitive, and/or complex that structure and direction are welcomed. As students identify what they want and what a situation seems to call for, they will use their skills in an appropriate, timely way.

3. *Experience in implementing skills* calls for the other practical activities suggested in this volume and for creative classroom exercises developed to teach specific skills. Skill-directed exercises can be developed by following a specific sequence:

1. Observe a student communication behavior that needs improvement (e.g., a group arguing over who was supposed to do specific parts of a project).
2. Identify the communication function that students need to practice (e.g., controlling) and the specific objective or action on which an activity must be focused (e.g., dividing up work and making clear agreements as to individuals' responsibilities).

3. Generate an activity in which students must practice the action. List very specific steps, if possible. For example,
   a. Give students a project to carry out in groups of five members, such as producing in one hour three copies of a five-page book of poems that will be judged for variety and quality of content and for attractiveness.
   b. Ask group members how satisfied they were with their role in the project, about how well others contributed to the project, and about how well the group got along.
   c. Give a short lecture on the relationship between involvement in decision making and degree of participant effort and commitment; about setting clear, measurable behavioral goals; and about the importance of verbally checking out and affirming agreements rather than "assuming" what people are going to do.
   d. Assign students a project similar to (a) above, but this time, calling for cartoons.
   e. Compare the two work episodes on the basis of the quality of the products and the members' satisfaction with the process.
   f. Discuss the experience in terms of repertoire ("What skills did you use? What behaviors make up each?"), selection (Did you treat individuals in the group differently? How? Why? In what situations would those skills *not* apply? Why?"), and evaluation (see questions on p. 56).

4. *Evaluation of communication attempts* heightens students' awareness of the *consequences* of their communication actions. Students might be asked to consider:
   1. How did my communication affect me? Did I feel good about it?
   2. How did my communication affect the person to whom I was talking? Did he or she do what I wanted? How did he or she feel?
   3. How did my communication affect our relationship?

Was I being supportive of my friend or was I being very critical?

Students can easily evaluate from their own perspective, but find it difficult to evaluate from another person's perspective. Teachers must stress the importance of taking the other's perspective. In a study comparing the development of listener-adapted communication of six-, eight-, ten-, and twelve-year-old boys, Delia and Clark (11) found that development takes this general path:

1. Children are unable to perceive characteristics in listeners relevant to particular communication tasks;
2. Listener characteristics are perceived, but their relevance to communication tasks is not drawn;
3. Relevance of listener characteristics is understood, but child's lack of control of the communication code leads to a prediction of failure;
4. Listener characteristics are responded to through global, undifferentiated strategies; and
5. Listener characteristics are responded to in a more refined and elaborated way.

Hence as students mature they become more aware of and better able to use the feedback provided by their listeners' reactions. Gifted and talented students are often especially perceptive of others' reactions at a relatively early age. (47)

Gifted Communicators as Teaching Assistants

The classroom can provide a context in which students gifted in communication can practice leadership skills. Teachers who use small group discussion for instruction might welcome the assistance of students who are trained in group leadership. Student leaders acting as teaching assistants (TAs) can help small study groups stick to a topic, integrate their ideas, minimize "horseplay," and discuss the group process itself. Student leaders can free the teacher to be available as a resource person for all the groups in a class, and they can provide feedback to the teacher on the assignment, student participation, or student response.

The speech communication teacher is in an especially appropriate position to train student leaders with preparatory training. This training can take place in an advanced course or in an extracurricular workshop. Book (6) describes a course for secondary school student teaching assistants and suggests that the training should include knowledge of:

a. leadership styles and their effects on group performance;
b. structures of groups (e.g., wheel, chain, circle, comcon) and the advantages and disadvantages of each;
c. problem-solving processes (i.e., Dewey);
d. types of decision making (e.g., consensus, majority, compromise);
e. role behavior of group members and reinforcing behaviors; and
f. means of resolving conflicts.

Book goes on to say

> The TA's should study research related to small group interaction and should participate in several groups to experience various leadership styles and group roles. The TA's should practice leading different groups and should try-out different leadership styles while adapting to different situations. While performing as a leader, the TA's should be videotaped or audiotaped to allow for personal evaluation of their roles. Feedback on their performance should be provided by group members, and, on the basis of all feedback, the TA candidates should modify their role behaviors. TA's should be encouraged to maintain a record of their experiences as a leader, the problem faced in conducting each group, their personal responses and feelings in the situations, and the feedback given them. Throughout the training period, TA candidates should conduct small group discussions in other classes, serve as group leaders in extracurricular activities or organizations outside of school, and report their experiences back to the class. In this manner, the TA candidates can share a variety of situational problems with each other and can brainstorm alternative means of handling the interactions. They may also observe other groups operating, hypothesize what factors make each group unique, identify what leaders of those groups did which was effective or ineffective, and suggest alternative ways of conducting the groups (6, pp. 238-239).

The effective flexibility required of the TAs can be enhanced if they are encouraged to vary their approach to fit the situation, task, and group members they encounter. Julia Wood (54) asks her students to develop a Leader's Brief, which calls for them to analyze the conditions in their group and to generate specific behavioral strategies for responding to events that their analyses lead them to anticipate (see Appendix IV).

By functioning as leaders of actual discussion groups and by carefully analyzing the goals they are choosing and the means they are using to achieve these goals, students will be receiving invaluable preparation for being effectively flexible leaders.

Independent Study Projects

Given the inherent individual differences in students' communication needs, independent study is an appropriate approach to learning in this domain. Kaplan (30) suggests that such projects have three phases: searching out information sources, assimilating acquired information, and reporting what has been learned. Below are samples of independent study projects that can be included in learning contracts for gifted students in junior and senior high:

1. Explore what experts have to say about issues in interpersonal communication that interest you. Find or ask me to recommend three discussions of any topic, and after reading them:
   a. Cite the three sources.
   b. Explain in what fundamental ways all agree.
   c. Point out how they differ.
   d. Summarize the particular material from these sources that was most meaningful to you.
2. Plan a specific instance in which you will use the concepts dealt with in this course in your everyday life. Do it and then evaluate your experience in the light of your objectives for this interaction.
   a. Describe the person or group with whom or in which you would like to change your behavior.
   b. Describe your habitual thoughts, feelings, or behaviors with the person or group.

c. Describe how you would like to respond ideally.
d. Describe what a realistic first step might be in growing toward this ideal.
e. Try it out in reality.
f. Evaluate it.
g. Make a plan for a next step.

3. We learn our modes of communication largely from the people around us, i.e., via observation. Therefore, it might be useful to devise some way of observing people communicating in situations in which you are interested. You may wish to observe people in a classroom, where they live, at an informal gathering place, etc. Decide where you are most likely to see what you want. Try to observe at least two examples of this situation. Prepare a list of things to look for and a way to record this information while observing (or afterward). Summarize the results of your observations.
4. An issue raised in this course may puzzle you. If so, it might be useful to discuss it with people you know. Select three to five people whose opinions you respect and ask them to participate in the following activities:
   a. List several questions you'd like all of them to answer. They may write their answers or you can listen to their oral responses and summarize the answers yourself.
   b. Or describe a problem situation or two involving this issue in communication. Ask how they would handle it and summarize their answers.
   c. If possible, ask for feedback on your behavior related to this issue.
   d. Look over what you obtained from the items given, and write a brief summary of what you learned through this investigation.
5. Select a work of fiction (novel, short story, play, film) in which a relationship between two people reminds you of one in class or in your everyday life.
   a. Describe the fictional relationship.
   b. Describe the real relationship.

c. Explore the similarities between the relationships and the implications that each has for the other (e.g., how could the problems in each be better handled?).
d. Xerox and turn in a key scene that epitomizes the relationship.

6. Carry out a creative project related to some aspect of this course. Two possible approaches are described here:
   a. Many important messages about human behavior have been expressed via means other than language. If nonverbal expression is meaningful, you might want to represent in drawings, dance, photographs, collage, sculpture, music, or other nonverbal medium some insight or feeling about human relations. Include a brief statement describing your intentions for this project.
   b. Creative writing often can bring out and clarify inner feelings and motivations. If you would like to try this exercise, write a short story or play in which some issue related to this course is part of the situation. You might include yourself as the central character. It might depict a situation very much like one you have experienced, or it might be an imaginary or ideal situation you would someday like to see occur.

Another approach to independent study, one particularly relevant to the subject of communication, involves doing projects in dyads. Individual work can be dry or lonely to the socially-oriented student, and classroom exercises often seem contrived. Most students prefer talking to one person outside of class. Indeed, many of the crucial communication experiences they will encounter will be dyadic (e.g., job interviews, college roommates, dating and marriage). Dyads are experiential, they allow each participant more "air time" than in a group, and they can be more involving and honest than groups. Furthermore, students can arrange to meet for dyads outside the school, in an environment where they can feel comfortable and can talk at length. At first students can be allowed to select their own dyad

partners. Later on they can be assigned to meet with a classmate they wouldn't ordinarily get to know very well. Dyads, too, can be incorporated in learning contracts for secondary school students.

Below are several suggestions for dyadic encounters students can carry out on their own. These encounters are structured to push students a bit beyond simple social interaction, thereby enhancing their flexibility. For some students, this amount of structure will seem burdensome—they would talk even more productively without it. Other students, who without a specified task would spend the dyad time in aimless small talk, often welcome such guidelines. A compromise would be to suggest a dyad plan, such as those provided below, but invite students to change or discard it if another plan seems more worthwhile. The structure is not essential, so long as the general theme is considered, the interactions stretch the students' limits, and the process is examined afterward.

1. *Personal sharing.* This dyad activity calls for each of you to affirm and share something about yourself. Give some thought beforehand to the things you are interested in. These might include an activity, a skill, a person, something you've done, something in your home, your field of study, your religion, an author you enjoy reading, a place you have visited, etc. When you get together discuss your lists and each choose one topic from the other person's options. Allow 15 to 20 minutes for the first person to be an expert and the other to be a learner. The point is to take time to experience having something about yourself that is worthwhile to share. Then switch roles. Finally, be sure to discuss the feelings that arose as you thought about what to share and as you experienced each role in the process.

2. *Listening.* This dyad focuses on giving and taking extended attention—more sharing and listening than we usually do. This time, when you meet in dyads, do not spend the time exchanging comments. Instead, for half the time (about 20 minutes) one person will be the speaker and the other will listen. The listener can ask questions, but essentially attention will be focused on one person at a time—the speaker. After 20 minutes are up, switch roles, and let the listener become the speaker.

During each person's speaking time, he or she can tell the other his or her life story in terms of one or more aspects of human relations. You might talk about the friends you've had, about your family, about your experiences in school or in traveling, about your experiences with shyness or with being assertive, etc. If you'd like, you can just review your human relations history in general. If you finish telling about one issue, switch to another until the 20 minutes are up.

3. *Forming first impressions.* Meet with your partner in a place where one of you knows several people (e.g., at a park, at a familiar restaurant, or anywhere else that you are likely to see your acquaintances). The "stranger" should share with the "native" his or her first impressions of the people you see. Try to be as specific as possible about the particular cues used to develop inferences about the people observed. Be as open as you can about what you think each person is like from his or her appearance or behavior. You might need to discuss whether the native would feel hurt if the stranger's impressions were negative. Try to understand *why* you are making those assumptions (e.g., the person reminds you of someone else). The native should give his or her opinion of how accurate the impressions are, based on having more experience with the individuals being observed. He or she might point out when the impressions are on target and when specific aspects are overlooked or misunderstood by the stranger. If possible, go to a spot where the roles can be reversed, so that each can have a comparable experience.

4. *Nonverbal awareness.* We can tune into the nonverbal dimensions most effectively when we ourselves are silent. Therefore begin your dyad by becoming acquainted. (The better you know the person, the easier this dyad will be.) Then decide upon any activity you can do together for about half an hour that does not require speaking. For example, go for a walk through a natural setting and perhaps through several places where people are gathered. Just look around you, touch things, listen to the sounds in each area, even taste and smell whatever you can. Communicate with each other by using nonverbal signs and signals. You might take turns being leader on your trek or take turns guiding your partner around while her or his eyes are closed. Ob-

serve people and animals; interact with them. See what is available when words don't get in the way. Spend your last few minutes together talking over your experience.

5. *Interpersonal openness.* It is interesting and insightful to identify those aspects of self that are easy to share and those aspects you prefer to keep private. It can also be valuable to try to expand your limits by being more open. Here is a list of topics to consider:

a. My hobbies, interests, and favorite leisure pursuits.
b. What I like and dislike about my body—appearance, health, etc.
c. My school (and outside) work—satisfactions, frustrations.
d. My financial situation: income, savings, debts, investments, etc.
e. Aspects of my parents I like and dislike; family problems encountered in growing up.
f. Religious views, philosophy of life, what gives meaning to my life.
g. My political views and practices.
h. My present relationships with the opposite sex.
i. My views on drugs and alcohol.
j. What I like, dislike about my partner, on the basis of this encounter.

Begin by rating the items listed: put an "E" next to those areas that you find "easy" to talk about; put an "H" next to those that are "harder" to share; put an "S" next to really "sensitive" areas. Then meet with your partner.

One person picks an E area and discusses how it is dealt with in his or her own life. The other person then offers his or her perspective. Then it is the second person's turn to pick an area to talk about, after which the first person responds. Alternate in this way until the Es have been exhausted, and proceed as far through the Hs and Ss as you wish or as time permits.

Neither of you should feel pressured to reveal anything you don't want to reveal. Probing questions by the listener are okay, but you can always answer, "I'd rather not say any more about that." Of course, the participants should agree to keep the conversation confidential.

6. *Self-affirmation.* It is hard for some people to reveal their strengths and achievements. However, this capacity can be very important for future personal and professional success. This dyad experience is intended to provide opportunities for this kind of interaction.

After the two partners in the dyad get to know one another they should divide their time in half. For the first half of the exercise one person acts as an "eliciter" and the other acts as a "responder." The goal of the eliciter is to encourage the responder to talk about her or his strengths and positive abilities. This might be done by asking some of these questions:

a. What were the times in your life when you felt most proud of yourself, when you did something well, or just felt good to be alive—during your elementary school years? in junior high? high school? during vacations? when you've worked at jobs? at home?
b. What do you consider to be your personal qualities, talents, skills, etc.?
c. When has someone praised you? When have you praised someone else? When have you wanted to praise someone, but couldn't do so fully? Have you ever felt uncomfortable when someone has praised you?
d. What are your hopes, dreams, and ambitions in regard to a job or career? in regard to a service to your community, nation, or the world? in regard to your home or family life?

After one person has interviewed the other for about 20 minutes, switch roles. Afterward discuss how it felt to put extreme emphasis on the positive.

7. *Expressing feelings.* Feelings can be so powerful that people hesitate to talk about them openly. Consequently, we sometimes believe that our emotional experiences are unique. This exercise works against this tendency. Share with your partner some of your most memorable experiences involving strong feelings. For example:

a. a time when you felt especially angry at someone
b. a time when you felt especially tense, nervous, or scared

c. a time when you felt most happy, joyful, glad to be alive

d. a time when you felt really cared for and loved, or when you felt this way about someone else

e. a time when you felt badly disappointed or hurt

f. a time when you felt grief or pain.

You might begin by picking any of these situations and exchanging a recollection each of you has about it. Talk about as many experiences as you wish or as many as time permits.

Keep in mind that the job of the listener is simply to hear and understand what is being told—*not* to interpret, analyze, probe, advise, moralize, or in any way act as counselor or judge.

8. *Interpersonal conflicts.* In learning how to handle conflicts constructively, you must first become aware of your present and past style of managing conflict. Think back over the interpersonal conflicts in which you have been involved during the past few years. Perhaps these conflicts have involved friends, parents, brothers and sisters, girlfriends or boyfriends, teachers, or a boss. In the spaces following, list three major conflicts and how you resolved them. Since space is limited, you may wish to abbreviate by writing down only a few key words describing the situations in which you have been involved and your style of conflict management.

After both partners in the dyad have completed this task, spend the rest of the hour sharing what you have written, discussing the situations described (what was effective and what wasn't, how each conflict might have been better resolved, etc.), and exchanging ideas about conflict resolution in general.

My Conflicts	How I Resolved the Conflict
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

9. *Handling disagreement.* This dyad approaches conflict more experientially. People who tend to avoid conflict and ordinarily are only comfortable when maintaining a cordial, pleasant, "nice" relationship can be encouraged to deal with this dimension of human relations in this dyadic exercise.

Perhaps you are paired with someone whose orientation to many issues is different from yours. Take advantage of those differences by focusing on them as fully as possible. Discover on what issues you disagree and discuss these at length. You might identify these issues by going through a newspaper and stopping at anything about which either of you has a strong opinion (i.e., a headline, an editorial, an advertisement, a cartoon, etc.). Share your opinions until you clearly understand one another, then move on to another topic. Or use the following list of controversial issues as a starting point:

a. men's and women's liberation
b. race relations
c. energy policies
d. America's Middle East policy
e. inflation
f. environmental protection
g. education
h. crime and delinquency
i. religion.

10. *Drawing others out.* One partner says to the other, "I would like you to know me better, so you are welcome to ask me any question you would like." This person is free to refuse to answer any question or simply give a partial answer. The questioner can stop the respondent at any time by saying, "Thank you." Roles should be reversed after 20 minutes. Here is a list of sample questions:

a. Can you name three people you admire?
b. At what time have you felt really proud of yourself?
c. What one thing would you like to change about yourself?
d. What do you think you will be doing three years from now?
e. What is your earliest memory?

f. What are your religious beliefs?
g. For whom are you going to vote in the election?
h. How do you feel about this group?
i. How do you feel about me?
j. How do you feel about being asked these questions?

11. *Exchanging feedback.* After spending some time together in group discussion, you and your partner can discuss communication of feelings by sharing your answers to the following questions.

a. What were our first impressions of each other?
b. How have we seen each other as understanding listeners?
c. How have we seen each other as being open about our feelings and reactions?
d. How have we seen each other support attempts to be open and honest?
e. Have we been able to confront each other when conflict exists?
f. In what ways is each of us outstanding and poor in communication? What can we do to improve in this area?
g. What is the state of our relationship?

12. *Intrapersonal and interpersonal interaction.* This task calls for you to express yourself creatively and then to share this picture of yourself with your partner. Follow these steps:

a. Write the question "Who am I?" on a piece of paper. Then answer it by creating a list of about six or seven words or phrases that describe you best.
b. For each word on your list, spontaneously create a drawing that symbolically represents that aspect of you. (Since you're drawing parts of yourself, no one can label these drawings "good" or "bad." So draw as freely as you like.)
c. Look over the series of drawings you have just made. Now create another drawing that synthesizes these aspects, that shows how they *interact* to form the whole person that you are.
d. Share with your partner your separate drawings and your synthesized drawing. You can discuss what

each means. (Or ask your partner to guess at the meaning of each drawing before you reveal it.) Use the drawings to get to know one another better.

e. With your partner create on one sheet of paper a drawing that answers the question "Who are we?" by symbolically representing how you two *interrelate.* (You can discuss your concept before beginning to draw, or just draw simultaneously, seeing what develops as you go along.)

13. *Taking charge of your interactions.* You have had many dyad experiences thus far. By now you probably have some sense of which experiences are most useful for you. Consequently, in this assignment you can determine for yourself what experience you will have. Each partner should be in charge of planning one-half of your time together; the other partner will cooperate in fulfilling the planner's needs. The first person begins by stating a goal for the time period (e.g., becoming better acquainted, having a relaxing conversation, exploring an issue in depth, resolving a conflict, etc.). Then this person describes the means or procedure for achieving this goal and continues to make suggestions along the way to help keep the dyad on target. This person is responsible for making sure that his or her half of the dyad is "selfishly" worthwhile. Reverse roles for the second half of the exercise. The second person then determines the goal for the dyad, and the first person cooperates.

In each of these 13 exercises, and in countless others, students are asked to prolong and deepen their experience with a type of discourse they use infrequently. This kind of practice enlarges their sense of what they can do with another person. Even if the dialogue is very ordinary, students can use the dyad as an experience by making it an opportunity to expand one's *awareness* of the process. This is accomplished if the teacher makes special provision for an extended, focused period of reflection upon the dyadic experience.

This period of reflection can be structured in several ways. For example, each participant can approach the task *alone* or in *discussion* with the other. Reflection can occur before, and/or immediately after the experience. *Prior* to

the dyad, participants might jot down or share orally their goals and expectations for the experience. At a point in the *middle* of the dyadic interaction, they might review what has occurred and what might yet be done to make the experience maximally beneficial. If reflection takes place *after* the dyad is over, many choices exist for bringing into conscious awareness the patterns that prevailed during the interaction. Students can give time alone and at their leisure, or together during the last half hour of their dyad, to drawing inferences about what occurred.

The focus of awareness can be on a variety of communication processes. Partners might zero in on processes that apply to all situations, processes specific to the kind of task they were addressing, or processes specific to the particular pair of people interacting. They can reflect on the kind of experience they had or, more subjectively, on themselves as participants. The range of possibilities is summarized in the following chart:

Area of Focus	Process-Related Questions	Self-Related Questions
Communication	How does communication work?	How do I communicate?
Task	How does communication work re: Task X?	How do I engage in Task X?
People	How does my partner communicate?	How do I deal with this kind of partner?

There are innumerable questions that fit under the main headings of this chart that would help students better understand their comments or behaviors in communication. Every system and theory of interpersonal relations and every kind of communication activity gives students another perspective on the situation. Each perspective pinpoints different behaviors, even different facets of the same behavior, as crucial in explaining and controlling communication.

Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest some questions that might be posed to encourage students to reflect and hopefully deepen awareness of dyadic communication:

1. Ask students to *describe* what occurred, within themselves and between them and their partner, before, during, and after the dyad. They might answer

such questions as: What did you expect you would do in this session? What did you expect your partner would do? How did you expect the activity to turn out? What actually occurred? What phases or episodes made up the interaction? What were the turning points? Did you feel any differences between the first half hour and the last half hour? What were your overall impressions regarding what you actually did, what your partner did, how you handled the activity? Are there any aspects of the interaction you would like to understand better?

2. Using the data and questions just raised, ask each partner in the dyad to consider some of the following questions:
   a. *Expectations vs. outcomes.* How did you see your partner and the activity before the dyad began? How did this view change by the time the interaction was over? How did your expectations affect what actually happened?
   b. *The effect of context.* To what extent did the time of day and the various environmental factors (noise, light, atmosphere, etc.) affect your interaction? How did events that immediately preceded the dyad and those that you knew would follow the dyad affect you?
   c. *The influence process.* How was the course of your interaction determined? How were decisions made? What unspoken norms affected what you did and did not do?
   d. *The affiliation process.* What was the "climate" of your interaction? How did you make your partner feel comfortable and uncomfortable? To what extent did you imply or state openly how you felt during your time together?
   e. *The verbal and nonverbal codes.* How did you use language to clarify or obfuscate your task or personal relationship? How did your props, positions, and gestures affect your interaction?
   f. *The task-related strategies.* How did the processes employed help or hinder you in achieving

your goal? How satisfied were you with your handling of the task? To what do you attribute the results?

g. *Person-related variables.* How did your role as a student help or hinder your involvement in your dyadic role? How did your sex, race, and personality affect the interaction and how you were seen by your partner?

h. *Interaction dynamics.* In what ways did your behavior trigger a reciprocal response in your partner? Did your openness about yourself cause your partner to be unusually open? Did your warmth, apathy, or argumentativeness begin a sequence that built into an exchange of comments that significantly redirected the whole interaction?

i. *Transfer of learning.* How does this experience compare to similar past interactions? What have you gained from participating in this task or interacting with this person? How can you apply this knowledge elsewhere?

Of course, any specific concepts introduced in text material or in a lecture related to the dyadic task can raise questions that students can explore together in a written assignment or in a class discussion.

To enhance students' awareness of how their dyadic interaction could be interpreted from another perspective, ask them to exchange with their partners their written reactions to the experience. If many pairs of students in a class have performed the same dyadic activity, papers could be exchanged among the group, thereby allowing each participant to see how that activity could be approached and handled differently by people with another set of dynamics operating between them.

Leaders' Support Group

Most schools have clubs or elective classes in which students can explore their shared interests. This opportunity should be available for students interested in leadership. Those actually serving as leaders in the school or in

the community can benefit a great deal from such a group.

The leader's role can set him or her off from the others in the group. Therefore, student leaders are prone to feeling more distant and less intimate with fellow students than they would like to be. They may be stereotyped by peers as confident, stuck-up, or power hungry. They may get stuck in a helper role and wind up with no one to turn to when they feel in need. Another problem is that their peers may hesitate to give them the feedback they need to grow more skilled as communicators.

For all these reasons student leaders usually find it helpful to meet with other leaders in a "support" group. Such a group could take the form of an elective class, an after-school club, or a regular weekend session. Dialogue could take one of two forms: (1) *discussing* the situations they are dealing with in their groups or (2) *practicing* better communication.

If student leaders choose to discuss group situations, two approaches could be used (or combined). Students could address, one session at a time, the issues that are likely to come up in any group and how to best handle them. Some issues include: (1) getting started, (2) conducting meetings, (3) making decisions, (4) handling conflict, (5) overcoming apathy, (6) integrating new members, (7) encouraging quiet people and dealing with dominators, and (8) working with budgets, the administration, publicity, etc. In this discussion group the moderator performs the following functions: (1) introduces the week's theme, (2) calls on people to participate, (3) makes sure every individual has a chance to share, (4) keeps the group on the theme, (5) minimizes evaluation of people's viewpoints, and (6) points out similarities and differences among the situations and methods described.

Students can also elect to use a problem-solving approach. At each meeting, anyone who has faced a particular problem that week throws it out to the group. The moderator sees to it that students follow an orderly sequence for problem-solving. First the speaker needs a chance to tell how the situation appears and how it makes him or her feel. Next the speaker must clarify the problem situation and what kind of help is needed. This step is crucial. Sometimes

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people just want their predicament to be heard and understood; sometimes they want others to tell about similar experiences they have had and how they handled them; sometimes they want advice regarding what to do; sometimes they want to know what options or choices are available; sometimes they want to ask others if they think a possible solution might work or if others perceive any contradictions, discrepancies, or errors in their thinking; sometimes they want feedback that will help them compare their behavior in the leaders' group with their behavior in their own group; sometimes they want a combination of the kinds of help suggested here. Once it is determined what kind of help is sought, the next step is to elicit from several members appropriate comments regarding the problem. The moderator can summarize the points raised. The speaker is then asked for a reaction to these suggestions. If the speaker is not satisfied with the help received, he or she can ask for additional aid, until the speaker feels better prepared to return to his or her own group.

A leader's support group can instead set as its goal aiding the members to share more genuine dialogue among themselves. A group of leaders are likely to have some personality traits and interests in common, and thus are likely to find friends within the group. If they strive to communicate openly and honestly among themselves, they might bring these same qualities back to their own groups. With these goals, the moderator should try to keep the conversation focused on the relationships among the group members. This can be a volatile process, and safeguards must be maintained. Comments made should be "owned"—that is, students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own role in interaction with others, rather than blame or criticize others. Once an issue is raised, it should be discussed to completion. People shouldn't be left hanging, feeling confused or hurt or excluded. Feelings should be aired fully and "worked through," so that participants feel that they are "clear" with one another. At such a point they are likely to move closer and build more "feelingful" relationships among themselves. Disclosure should be reciprocal. If one person shares something risky or intimate with another or with the group, the other(s) should be asked to

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express views on that issue—rather than allow one person to be the "client" or sustained target of the group's attention. The moderator must be sure that people really listen to and understand accurately what others have said (perhaps by asking if the person would put the message into his or her own words before responding to it.) Finally, if tensions arise in the group they should be dealt with immediately and not put off so that resentment builds up. To lead such a group requires more skill on the part of the teacher than does any other form of leadership training, so it should not be attempted unless the teacher is well informed and experienced in this technique. (15)

Internships

As mentioned earlier, communication and leadership are complex processes that require a wide range of skills. Only some of these skills can be taught in the artificial environment of the classroom. Students gifted in communication must also observe and practice leadership in "real-life" community settings. Internships provide ideal opportunities for expanded learning. People who have entered "people-contact" professions—such as teaching, social work, business, therapy, theatre, etc.—commonly report that they learned the most from the practicum, clinical work, student teaching, or internship. They also report that this aspect usually is more exciting, challenging, and enjoyable for them than classroom work.

At the heart of the internship process is the person with whom the student will be working most closely—the mentor. There are many persons in leadership positions—executives, librarians, ministers, government officials, supervisors, nursing home administrators—who welcome sharing their world with a young person. A surprising number are willing, even eager to do so. (46) The time period is flexible and can range from a day, to several afternoons on a weekly basis, to a summer, to whatever.

The Executive High School Internships of America, headquartered in New York, helps school districts throughout the country develop and implement programs for junior and senior high school students of high ability. Selection criteria include initiative, perserverance, creativity, leader-

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ship, maturity, and sensitivity. Participating schools grant qualified students a one-term leave from all classes. During the term students receive academic credit in regular subject areas while they work with key decision makers in their communities. Weekly seminars reinforce management skills and decision-making skills. Students receive no salary, but their work experience often leads to summer or permanent employment, or to a decision about what career to pursue in college and after. (10)

Such a program is exemplary, but a modest prototype can be established locally. The first step is to gain administrative support. Then contact local businesses and nonprofit organizations. The Chamber of Commerce and a volunteer clearinghouse organization are good places to start. Two national organizations—the Public Affairs Council in Washington, D.C. and the Human Resources Network in Philadelphia—supply information on all the major companies that have social responsibility programs.

Get the ball rolling by writing or phoning each potential cooperating organization. Describe the intent of the internship program and request an interview. Ask students which kind of organization they would prefer to work in, and assign each student a "lead" to follow up. In the classroom discuss ways to handle an initial interview, and make use of role-playing. Students need to learn how to appear and act in a job interview, especially how to make inquiries that will uncover several ways in which they can be useful to the organization and to the individual with whom they will work. These skills will come in handy for future job hunting. A teacher or administrator can accompany students to their first interview, at least until a successful working liaison is established with that company. Be sure to establish the exact nature of the student's relationship with the mentor at that meeting.

In class students can discuss their internship experiences as they go along. They should also maintain a detailed written account of their activities and what they learned from the experiences. Their journals and final reports can be passed on to future generations of interns so that these students can have some foreknowledge of what to expect and what will be expected of them in such a role.

In Non-Speech Communication Classrooms

Oral communication, like reading and writing, cuts across disciplinary lines and plays a significant role in every classroom situation. In fact, the bulk of in-class learning occurs through oral interaction. Teachers in all subject areas can nurture giftedness in communication and leadership. This can be done in several ways:

1. Encourage students to work together in groups. Whenever projects are completed through interpersonal cooperation, students are developing and using communication skills essential for their future success. The group process also requires that leadership functions emerge. Small groups can take many forms (see p. 35), and a rich variety should be included.
2. Employ a classroom governance system. Allow students to discuss, establish, and enforce their own disciplinary rules, if possible. This, too, encourages the development of leadership skills.
3. Use games and simulations to teach. If students experience the rich complexity of interaction in situations that place them at the hub of conflicting expectations from people with varying vested interests, they will be better prepared for the exigencies of communication in modern organizational life.
4. Ask students to share their written work and their ideas in oral reports, debates, panel discussions, symposia, and the like. The ability to speak before an audience is a component of most leadership roles, yet no other aspect arouses such anxiety, most often in people who have not had early success in this area. (14)
5. Talk through personal and procedural differences of opinion. The more often students see that problems can be worked out through interpersonal communication rather than through force or rigid rules or imposition of authority, the more willing they will be to discuss (rather than bury) problems in their own lives.

6. Provide opportunities for students to teach, tutor, or otherwise aid in the instructional process. The ability to train others is another component of most leadership roles, and this work can be useful preparation.
7. Never humiliate or ridicule students who share their ideas in class, and do not allow others to do so. How people talk is intimately intertwined with their self-concept. When someone mocks their manner of speaking, their basic confidence is dealt a blow.
8. Finally, do not view outspokenness as an irritant in the classroom. Of course, outspokenness can get in the way of discipline and slow progress through planned work. But it can also represent an outburst from a student gifted or potentially gifted in communication. Watch for clues that say that you should allow more time for talk.

APPENDIX I
INTROSPECTION ACTIVITIES

These activities can be selected by students or teachers. They are designed to explore students' past, present, and future orientations to the communication skills being studied (e.g., those listed on pp. 22-24). Each activity can give students insights into their behavior and attitudes, as well as suggest techniques for overcoming current or potential problems.

1. Students have learned a great deal from observing others. Ask them "How do your parents, others in your family, or your friends generally handle skill X? Are there similarities between their behavior and your own?"
2. Students might generalize or assume that similarities exist between past situations and the present one. "Does the person with whom you have difficulty handling skill X remind you at all of someone with whom you shared similar experiences earlier in your life? How are the two people similar? How are they different?"
3. Students might feel inhibited as a result of a past traumatic experience. "Can you recall an experience involving skill X that was keenly embarrassing or frustrating? What made it so? As you engage in skill X, to what extent do you believe memories of that past experience affect your current attitude toward it? Do you know now why that experience turned out badly? Do you now have the knowledge, or can you learn something new, that will help you handle similar situations more effectively?"
4. Students might have had very positive experiences that they can recall and apply to their present situation. "Identify an experience you have had using skill X that was particularly satisfying or rewarding. Recall what *you* did to bring it about, being as specific as possible in delineating the steps you took. List the steps in chronological order, and feel no qualms about affirming your contribution to making that experience a successful one.

5. Many students may already have had some formal training in the skill to be taught. "Have you ever learned about skill X in school, read about it in a book, or in any other way had some formal instruction in how to deal with situations like these? If so, what did you learn that sticks in your mind today?"

6. At times students' interaction is guided by "old tapes" or parents' homilies about "good" behavior and what "should" be done. This suggests the question, "How would your parents have advised you to behave when doing skill X? Would their advice be different for dealing with specific people in your life? To what extent do you strive to live up to this advice?"

7. A technique called "self-characterization" suggests a broader approach to introspection. "Write a description of yourself telling what you think, feel, and do when using skill X, just as if you were the principal character in a play. Write the description as it might be written by a friend who knows you very well, cares about you, likes and respects you, and is honest and open. Be sure to write it in the third person. For example, start out by saying, "He (or she) is _____." Then review this sketch and underline the statements that are of greatest significance for guiding your future personal growth in this process.

8. A student's responses can be divided into the "persona" (the superficial social mask of the individual presented to others in social relationships) and the "ego" (a deeper part of the psyche that reflects personal experiences and is partly conscious and partly unconscious). When these two differ, a person often experiences disharmony and frustration. This orientation suggests the following line of questioning: "In our desire to get along with others, at times we don't fully reveal or act in accord with what we really think or feel. Can you recall instances, when engaging in skill X, when your social self or mask differed markedly from your inner or

real self? If so, identify the people or conditions that made you inhibited. Imagine what might have happened and how you would have felt if you had been more open and honest. Do those same influences exist now? What implications, if any, does this exploration have for your future growth goals?"

9. Students sometimes find it valuable to monitor or register ongoing thoughts for a period of time, without judgment. This "free association" can enhance self-awareness. "Begin with the phrase 'skill X,' and then think aloud on paper, writing whatever comes to mind. Try not to censor anything, except to return to this theme when you wander from it. Do this for ten minutes without lifting your pencil from the paper. Then look back over what you have written and underline what seems most significant to you."
10. Many students, after engaging in an interpersonal encounter, evaluate the interaction by irrational, impossible standards that balloon feelings of self-denigration. Some students need to judge themselves more kindly, more realistically. "By what criterion or standard do you judge whether or not you have done skill X to your satisfaction? In other words, what would make you feel an experience involving skill X was successful? What would make you feel it was a failure? We often set unrealistically high standards for ourselves, making frustration likely. Review your evaluation criteria for this possibility, perhaps by considering whether you would want a best friend to live up to these criteria. If they seem too demanding, revise them until they seem within the realm of possibility."
11. Long-range goals can enhance the determination and effectiveness students bring to current struggles. Students should clarify what they most want to accomplish by identifying the tasks that would give meaning and value to their lives. Ask them to clarify how a process in communication would fit into those personal goals by considering: "Suppose after you

die someone wants to write an obituary describing who you were and what you did in your lifetime. If that person could describe you as you would like to be, what are some accomplishments that you would want to see included? How might increased use of skill X help you to realize these accomplishments?"

12. Sometimes long-range, vaguely expressed goals can be less effective in achieving change than short-term goals that can be evaluated objectively. Short-term goals provide quick, frequent checkpoints and opportunities for reinforcement. Consequently, students might be asked, "Consider your activities for the near future and decide upon a time and place when you might employ skill X in a new or more effective way. Describe in detail what you will do, with whom, when, and where. Also state what would have to happen for you to consider this action successful."

13. Students operate most effectively when they are clear about the values that give shape to their behavior. One way to assist value clarification is to ask students to consider the alternatives to their decisions. When individuals have made a choice after considering all their options, they are likely to be more satisfied with the decision. "Another step in evaluating your goal(s) is to consider what other choices you could have made. People often make decisions without adequately assessing their options. Try to list some other goals you could have chosen, and rank their desirability along with the choice you have already made. Is your initial choice still the preferred one?"

14. Human behavior often follows an internal dialogue between two poles of the self, sometimes called the "top dog" and the "underdog." The former advocates an ideal behavior; the latter brings up excuses or reasons for avoiding it. Students might be encouraged to externalize this dialogue in the hope that it will help them integrate both parts of them-

selves and feel more centered and less conflicted about their experiences. "If you are experiencing a desire to achieve your goal and some hesitation or resistance to pursuing it, imagine that each impulse has a voice of its own. Write a dialogue in which these voices within you speak to each other until some resolution is reached."

15. It is helpful for students to identify what they want, agree to do what is necessary to attain their goals, and responsibly carry out the steps until the job is done. When they are successful in taking responsibility for themselves, they feel more capable and they bring more of their lives under their own control. They can practice this process with this exercise. "Identify the time or date by which you would like to achieve your goal. Describe what you will need to do in order to bring it about. Write this up as a contract with yourself. For example, 'By date X, I will _____.' Then try to live up to that commitment. (If you do not succeed, it could mean that expectations were unrealistic and you need to write another contract that is more appropriate.)"

16. Students are more likely to do whatever gets them what they want (rewards). "If you were to carry out Activity 15, what reward(s) would it bring? Could you plan a reward for yourself that would encourage you even more to carry it out?"

17. Students need to see their own life situations from another person's point of view. "Choose a communication-centered goal and use your imagination to predict what will happen. Write it out in dialogue form. This script can provide clues as to where you believe problems might arise and, perhaps, will generate ideas about how these problems might be overcome."

18. Feelings that underlie our behavior sometimes must be brought to the surface and be acknowledged openly. This exercise might help a student become more aware of the unspoken feelings beneath interactions. "Review the dialogue you wrote in Activity

17 and try to guess the feeling each person might be experiencing when speaking (e.g., fear, anger, hurt, joy). Write these emotions in the margin next to the comments. Then consider how the situation might work out if these feelings were acknowledged openly."

APPENDIX II

TEACHER/STUDENT AGREEMENT ON COURSE GROUND RULES

1. I understand (_____) do not understand (_____) the outcomes we are working for in this class.
2. I see (_____) do not see (_____) value in them for me.
3. I understand (_____) do not understand (_____) the methods we will use to achieve these outcomes.
4. I agree (_____) do not agree (_____) that they seem to be effective means for achieving our outcomes.
5. I understand (_____) do not understand (_____) what my responsibilities will be in this class.
6. I agree (_____) do not agree (_____) that these responsibilities are necessary for this class to work, and I agree (_____) do not agree (_____) to live up to each responsibility listed.
7. I understand (_____) do not understand (_____) the choices I will be able to make in this course.
8. I will (_____) will not (_____) make those choices and will inform (teacher's name) of my choices on the dates listed.
9. I understand (_____) do not understand (_____) what (teacher's name) will and won't be doing in this class.

_____
Student

_____
Teacher

APPENDIX III

TROUBLESHOOTING CHECKLIST*

Complete the following checklist at the first sign of difficulty. Checks in the NO column indicate areas that need extra work.

	YES	*NO*
1. Did you select the right skill?	____	____
2. Did you write a behavior-change contract?	____	____
3. Was your behavior-change goal a realistic one?	____	____
4. Were the rewards stated clearly and realistically?	____	____
5. Were the negative consequences stated clearly and realistically?	____	____
6. Did you specify bonus rewards?	____	____
7. Did you keep records of skill use?	____	____
8. Did you get enough initial support from others?	____	____
9. Did you rehearse the skill well enough?	____	____
10. Was the original rehearsal realistic enough?	____	____
11. Did you rehearse the skill with *different* people in *different* situations?	____	____
12. Did you get adequate feedback on how you were doing?	____	____
13. Did you coach yourself (self-verbalize) well enough?	____	____
14. Did you first try the skill with people who were likely to be supportive?	____	____
15. Did the person(s) with whom you tried the skill respond in an unreasonable manner?	____	____

* *Source:* A. P. Goldstein et al. *I Know What's Wrong, But I Don't Know What to Do About It.* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979), pp. 119-120.

16. Did you reward yourself for *progress* with the new skill use? ____ ____
17. Did you follow through with your rewards? Did you *say* and *do* rewarding things for good skill use? ____ ____
18. Did you reward yourself soon enough after using the skill well? ____ ____
19. Did you follow through with negative consequences for not living up to your contract? ____ ____

APPENDIX IV

LEADER'S BRIEF*

I. *Analysis and Diagnosis:* The purpose of this first component of the brief is to direct leaders' attention to consideration of those factors which are most relevant to their effectiveness in leading purposive discussions. Its focus is on encouraging individuals to conduct thorough and perceptive analyses of the unique natures of their circumstances.

A. *The Issues*

What is the nature of our task? What has been done so far, and what remains to be accomplished with the task? What information are various members responsible for obtaining, analyzing, and presenting? How should our tentative agenda be organized? What are some stimulating guiding questions that I may have handy for directing our discussion? Are members involved with this project, or are they lethargic? Do members appear to be considering all sides of the task, or are they locking into a prematurely biased view?

B. *The Group as a Whole*

Has the atmosphere been formal or informal in the past meetings? Is the group, as a whole, mo-

* *Source:* Julia T. Wood. "The Leader's Brief: Teaching an Adaptive Approach to Leading," *Communication Education* 26: 354-358; 1977.

tivated and cohesive? Does the group generally operate in an efficient and cooperative manner? Are there any factions or potential factions forming among members of this unit? Do members engage in healthy, integrative conflict and open differences of opinion? Is the size of our group smaller or larger than ideal? Are there any consistent seating patterns employed by our group and, if so, are they desirable? Is participation relatively balanced? Are all necessary behaviors (roles, functions) performed in our discussions?

C. *The Individual Members*

Do any individuals tend to dominate our discussions? Do any members tend to be overly quiet and, if so, have I any indications of their reasons (e.g., resentment, shyness, lack of preparation, past rejection in the group)? Does anyone tend to make irrelevant remarks or to offer extended examples which promote tangential conversation? Has anyone had his/her ideas rejected in previous meetings so that I might want to be especially sure that that person's contributions are valued by the unit? Does anyone seem dissatisfied with the balance between task and social activities in our meetings? What strengths and weaknesses relevant to discussion does each member possess?

D. *The Situation*

How much time pressure constrains our deliberations? In what physical situation does the group meet: formal or informal, tables and chairs or more casual furniture, a home or some impersonal area? At what times of day have we been meeting? What sort of communication networks, if any, have developed in our group? Do we have relations with any other group(s): competing with them or depending upon them for materials, etc.?

E. *Myself as Leader*

What are my goals for myself, the task, and the members as I lead this group? How have I led them (or how have they been led by previous leaders) in the past? Do they seem to see me as task-oriented because of my emphasis on agenda? Do they see me as maintenance-oriented because of my behavioral attention to joking and attempts to energize the group? Do I contribute with so much frequency or in such a manner that some may view me as dominant? Are my members' probable perceptions of me consistent with the image I desire to promote in order to achieve my goals with this group? If not, what discrepancies exist, and how might I begin to remedy them?

II. *Strategies for Managing the Discussion:* The purpose of this second component of the brief is to encourage leaders to brainstorm possible ways of handling those events which they may reasonably predict, based on the analyses conducted in the first portion of the brief. In this section of the brief leaders should focus on developing concrete, behavioral strategies for managing the issues of discussion, the group members, and the situation. Strategies may address task, procedural, or interpersonal concerns or all of these depending upon the nature and requirements of the particular circumstances. The goal of this component, then, is to help leaders prepare themselves for specific events that have some probability of occurring.

1. I sense the possibility of two factions being formed within our group, and I want to avoid divisiveness. I will appoint two research subcommittees which contain members from each of the potential factions. If possible I'll also mix up the seating patterns so that the "factions" aren't grouped together.
2. I need to be careful that ideas initiated by Marylyn receive adequate consideration by the group. She is too quick to abandon a suggestion

that doesn't receive immediate acceptance. I'll plan on acting as a Devil's Advocate, providing initial support for her suggestions, to make sure she is fairly heard.

3. I must try to find a way to support some of Bob's ideas if I legitimately can since he may be harboring some resentment from our veto of his proposal at the last meeting.
4. I need to reduce Ann's dominance of our discussions. If possible I'll arrange for her to sit at one end of the table to reduce her centrality in the group. In addition, I'll ask her to be our recorder during the next meeting, and I'll request that she make very detailed notes. This task may keep her somewhat occupied and, thus, prevent her from dominating our conversations.
5. I think I'll either call or send members advance copies of our next agenda. That formal move on my part should prepare members for an efficient and businesslike meeting.

APPENDIX V

EVALUATING PROGRAMS

It is difficult to measure the effectiveness of education programs for the gifted, especially in the realm of communication and leadership. If programs are effective, they will enhance students' ability to use their talents more fully and make the most of the social situations they face. Comparisons of pre- and post-training behaviors, or outcomes of pre- and post-training situations, are confounded by factors such as maturation, changing circumstances, and special attention (Hawthorne) effects.

Nevertheless, any program focused on communication giftedness must be assessed. The impact of that program can be measured by several indices. Since communication is an applied discipline, we are looking for behavioral outcomes. These fall into two main categories:

1. indicators of reduced communication breakdowns
2. indicators of improved communication functioning.

Since one's communication style is deeply imbedded, changes are slow in coming. Allow a full academic year, or longer if possible, before measuring overt change. Hence, make counts of the items listed below during the school year *before* such a program is inaugurated, and then near the end of the year *after* it has been instituted. Among students identified as having potential social giftedness, look for the following signs:

A. From the students
   1. Self-perceived personal strengths (for number of items relating to social interaction)
   2. Self-report of overall attitudes toward school
   3. Self-report of possible career plans (for number of items requiring leadership ability)
   4. Self-report of the number of students they enjoy working with in their class
   5. Self-report regarding degree of satisfaction with relationships at home, at school, in the community

B. From teachers in other classes
   1. The frequency with which target students participate orally in their class
   2. The quality of target students' participation in their class (e.g., consider timeliness of comments, relevance of comments, consideration of others, leadership in groups, etc.)

C. From school administrators
   1. The target students' attendance record
   2. Incidents requiring disciplinary action by an administrator
   3. Number of target students who are involved in group projects that contribute to welfare of the whole school
   4. Number of dropouts from such programs
   5. Quality of target students' participation in projects (e.g., consider their ability to work inde-

pendently, to plan and carry out work, to complete work on schedule)

6. Quality of the products of their work (e.g., ask "experts" in the community to compare group projects done by students in the program and those not in the program for degree of integration, creativity, comprehensiveness, etc.)

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The author of *Teaching Gifted and Talented Students Oral Communication and Leadership* believes "The 1980's promise to be a decade of stunning social change. . . . Tensions will be high, various special interest groups will compete for preeminence, and institutions will have to reorient themselves. Gifted students who become nuclear physicists, college presidents, hospital administrators . . . will, in the course of their careers, have to explain, defend, negotiate and in countless other ways carry out demanding transactions with people of divergent viewpoints."

To help teachers work with and develop gifted and talented students in these areas, this publication gives special attention to such aspects as Choice-Making, Learning How to Learn, Self-Directed Learning, Leaders Support Groups, Internships and Programs in Non-Speech Communication Classrooms. A Troubleshooting Checklist is included, as well as suggestions on Evaluating Programs.

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